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THE POINT OF VIEW IS A PRIME FACTOR IN PICTORIAL ART

PHOTOGRAPHY AND FINE ART

BY

HENRY TURNER BAILEY

Dean of the Cleveland School of Art.
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Cleveland Museum of Art

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ART AND MUSIC DEPARTMENT

TO EVERYBODY

WHO ENJOYS A CAMERA AND LIKES PHOTOGRAPHS, AND WHO IN SECRET WISHES THAT HE KNEW MORE ABOUT HOW TO PRODUCE BEAUTIFUL PICTURES, THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED, BY ONE TO WHOM THAT STATE OF MIND IS LIKE A FAMILIAR FRIEND.

PREFACE

THIS book is a revision of a series of illustrated articles first published in The School Arts Magazine. The articles were written in the hope that they might promote a more intelligent and extensive use of the camera in the public schools as an aid to knowledge and taste. They are now reprinted in book form in the hope that they may be useful to amateur photographers everywhere, who have had a taste of the golden apples in the garden of Hesperides, and who hunger and thirst for fuller satisfaction.

The aim of the book is aesthetic. Nothing will be found in it about the mechanical or chemical technique of photography. Those who desire help in that direction must look elsewhere. I have endeavored to state clearly and to illustrate adequately those principles of composition, those elements of beauty, which in my own experience, and in the close observation of the work of others, I have found to be illuminating and dynamic.

While knowledge of principles and familiarity with the elements of beauty will never alone enable a person to produce a beautiful thing in any realm of art, the informed person is likely to make fewer ridiculous attempts than the ignorant person, who excuses himself—and justifies himself—by saying, "I know nothing about art, but I know what I like."

The genius does seem to have intuitive knowledge, and to do the successful thing without apparent effort. But the successful thing is never the lawless thing. As Lanier has so well said

> "The poet, mad with heavenly fires,
> Flings men his song white-hot, then back retires,
> Cools heart, broods o'er the song again, inquires,
> Why did I this, why that? and slowly draws
> From Art's unconscious act Art's conscious laws."

And those laws become the guiding principles of the less gifted, enabling them, when faithfully respected, to produce work that is at least "not too bad."

There is, however, another reason for studying composition and searching for the elements of beauty. "The greater the knowledge, the greater the love," Leonardo da Vinci used to say. No one can observe and analyze beautiful things in nature or works of art without increasing his capacity to appreciate and therefore to enjoy the best.

Photography has led thousands upon thousands of people into the magic world of pictorial art, where the masters of painting freely offer radiant companionship and perennial joy to the open-minded lover of beauty. That this book may prove helpful in shortening the journey of the lusty and hopeful photographer from the Land of Longing to the Land of Heart's Desire, is my hope.

To the many friends who have helped in the making of this book, by furnishing photographs for reproduction, whose names are usually mentioned in the text,—though not always, for obvious reasons!—I wish to express here my sincere thanks. Without their help the book could not have been made. They may not agree with all I say about their pictures, but they must solace themselves with the thought, that "a man is not responsible for the conclusions people draw from his remarks"—how much less from his pictures!

And now, joy to you! O Reader. You will like my friends' pictures, whatever you may think of my text.

HENRY TURNER BAILEY

TRUSTWORTH
NORTH SCITUATE, MASS.
SUMMER OF 1918

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He dipped his brush and tried to fix a line,
And then came peace, and gentle beauty came,
Turning his spirit's water into wine,
Lightening his darkness with a
touch of flame.
O, joy of trying for beauty, ever the same,
You never fail, your comforts never end;
O, balm of this world's way; O, perfect
friend!

—*MASEFIELD.*

Photography and Fine Art

CHAPTER I

Where We All Begin

HERE is the first picture I ever made with the camera,—a picture of my own house,—of course! Everybody begins the same way. Pleased with his first camera, impatient to see his own first print, the amateur shoots at the first thing that strikes his fancy.

PLATE I. A TYPICAL FIRST PHOTOGRAPH WRONGLY EXPOSED, CRUDELY DEVELOPED, BADLY COMPOSED, AND UNTRIMMED.

That first thing is almost invariably something that he calls his own. He likes to be able to say to his friends, "This is my house; my wife; my dog; my summer camp; the view from my front door." Pride of achievement is always in evidence when the first prints are shown. The budding solar artist has the I-did-it-with-my-little-hatchet manner.

Unless one has actually used a camera he can hardly appreciate the tang of such an experience. For the first time, it may be, this

boy who has always liked to look at pictures, has had a sip of the intoxicating joy of the artist, the joy of creating a picture. As Elihu Vedder once said, "Creation of any sort is the greatest fun in the world. At the moment the thing is conceived, you are crazy with delight. To be sure you are to have no end of trouble with it afterwards, to make it presentable; but for the moment you are in an ecstasy that you wish would last forevermore." This elation

PLATE II. ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THE KIND OF PLATE THE AMATEUR ALWAYS PRODUCES, FULL OF BLEMISHES.

of spirit is the will-o-the-wisp that dances and beckons and lures the amateur photographer onward o'er moor and fen, through spoiled plates and bad prints, until he comes at last, if he survives, to a genuine appreciation of the finest pictorial art of the world.

At the outset, however, his delight is not predominantly an esthetic delight. It is too intensely personal; the i in the midst of that delight is a capital I. Looking over his collection of prints his thoughts caress the subject, the occasion, the incident, that each print recalls; they do not focus on the print itself as a well composed picture.

In a word the amateur photographer, in common with almost everybody else who begins to look at pictures, is in the *reminiscent* stage of appreciation. To such people a picture has value chiefly as it recalls something definite in their own personal experience.

Jones prizes Plate II because Jones took it himself during his summer vacation. It is the beach where he saw his first sand collar. "It was the most beautiful of August afternoons," he will tell you, "and we were paddling right along there in a canoe. The water was still and clear, just as you see it in the photograph, and looking over, where the water was shallow, there we found the sand collar. Queerest animal I ever saw! Ever seen one?" That the picture is badly composed and skewed on the plate, that it is not a picture of a sand collar, that it does not even suggest an August afternoon, makes no difference to Jones. He made it. He remembers all about it.

PLATE III. AN AMATEUR PLATE OF INTEREST TO NOBODY BUT THE PHOTOGRAPHER AND HIS IMMEDIATE FRIENDS.

Brown prizes Plate III. Brown took it. It is also prized by Brown because he built that booth for his sister's wedding. Brown's sister likes the picture because it shows where she was married. Brown's new brother-in-law,—in fact all the members of both families of the high contracting parties like the picture. They do not object to the bisymmetrical composition, to the numbers on the pews, to the confused detail, to the fact that it is really a picture of a big Bible, because to them it is merely a souvenir of a very pleasant occasion when for once they all held the center of the stage. To them the picture is *therefore* an excellent work of Art.

Smith's favorite picture is Plate IV. He made it. It is a picture of his little girl, playing Indian in a suit he bought for her; she was creeping around the corner of his own house, and didn't know she was being photographed. That underpinning was his own design, he informs you; it was made of the rough stone found on his place. You will see that the little girl's face is beautiful if you will but

examine it carefully. But that beauty, and in fact the entire head, is overpowered by the feathered headdress and that brutal wall behind it. Smith doesn't see that, because in the picture he sees chiefly a happy moment in his own life.

For Jones, Brown, Smith & Company, these pictures are pictures indeed. What are such vague things as an "Effect" by Monet, or some "Paysage" by Corot, or an "Arrangement" by Whistler, compared with these solid realities—"all of which I saw and a part of which I was"?

PLATE IV. A QUITE CHARMING SUBJECT OVERPOWERED BY ITS ENVIRONMENT.

People in the reminiscent stage of appreciation bring home from Europe not fine photographs of the immortal masterpieces of painting, but colored post cards of the places they have visited. A young friend of mine prized most a card in her collection showing the Belfry of Brughes. Why? Not because of the impressive architectural character of the Belfry; not because of its historic significance; not because of Longfellow's contribution to its fame; but because, forsooth, as she was fond of repeating: "You can see by looking at the picture that the hands of the clock point to quarter past ten,—the very moment I stepped into the square and looked at that Belfry for the first time." That fact alone lifted the post card above the level of the Belfry itself and made it, for Mary Ann, an adorable work of fine art.

This personal interest in pictures associated with one's own experience is inevitable. It is also significant. Suppose, for example, that cameras should be placed in the hands of school children, at the beginning of their study of geography. Suppose the children were asked to make photographs from the brook they know, from the people of different nationalities in their own village, from the productions of their own town, from their local means of trans-

portation. What an intense interest the pictures would arouse. How observation would be quickened. Objects would acquire a new meaning. A thing once photographed would become fixed in mind. The transition from Home Brook to the Amazon, from Lew the Laundryman to the Chinese, from local apples to Cuba's oranges, and from "Our" railroad to the Trans-Siberian Railway, by means of pictures, would be an easy and assured transition. The foreign picture would be correctly interpreted on the basis of the local picture so highly prized and so thoroughly understood. After all, the photograph of a domestic cat walking in my hayfield is not so very different from the photograph of a Bengal tiger stalking in a jungle. From the known to the related unknown by way of pictures *one of which you yourself have made* is an excursion that yields nothing but delight.

The first pictures of the amateur are always educational. Be he child or man, they open his eyes to his environment and sharpen his sight. He sees every familiar object from a different angle, under a new light, in a novel web of relationship. The staid old things of his daily round spring surprises upon him at every turn. How frequently he catches himself saying: "I never thought it looked like that!" or "I never saw it that way before!" Moreover, all other pictures begin to take on fresh values. When he buys an illustrated magazine he gets more for his money.

For thousands of minds the camera has been the initiator of that all-important process by which the three-dimensioned world of the common man is reduced to the two-dimensioned world of the artist, only that it may become the limitless world of the spirit. A great picture is but a gateway through which the enfranchised may pass to perennial satisfactions.

PLATE V. THE BACK-YARD WALL OF MRS. COONLEY-WARD'S HOUSE, CHICAGO. A PHOTOGRAPH WHICH, FROM THE SCIENTIFIC POINT OF VIEW, LEAVES NOTHING TO BE DESIRED. AS A RECORD OF FACTS IT IS BEYOND CRITICISM.

CHAPTER II

Our Common Second Step

THE growing photographic artist next falls in love with technique. He begins to talk learnedly about negatives and papers, ray filters and iris diaphragms, eichonogen and tank developers. His admiration for a print like that reproduced in Plate v is boundless. "What definition!" he exclaims; "Look at the detail! From the grass blades in the foreground to the mortar lines of the brickwork, from the ivy leaves to their shadows, even to the reflections in the windows, everything is perfect. Look at the wrought iron railings! Notice the light and shade even upon the smallest detail. How well timed was the exposure, and the developing, and the printing! See the detail in the shadows! That is what I call an ideal photograph."

It is indeed. It leaves nothing to be desired—from the point of view of the man who made it, and from the point of view of the chemist. It is ideal also from another point of view, that of the statistician. As a record of facts it is beyond criticism. When Mrs. Coonley-Ward, in her country estate in New York, wishes to prove to her guests how beautiful a back yard in a city can be, this photograph, from her Chicago home, is absolutely convincing.

A photographer must remain forever a bungler unless he passes through this experience with technical detail. It is a veritable developing bath for his brain. He comes to know his tools, and to be master of them,—if he was born to be a photographer. Without such knowledge and such skill, nothing fine can ever be produced except by occasional accident—and then the amateur, usually, does not know enough to recognize his good luck.

During this period, that may for convenience be called the *scientific* stage of appreciation—a stage from which some people never emerge,—certain types of subjects in every locality not only offer themselves but actually cry out for recognition.

(1) Of these the most obvious are the old landmarks. In every settlement, village, town, and city are things that the next generation will want to know about. That Lone Pine which located the first store, for example; that butte, visible for miles across the prairie, that placed the town; those first miners' cabins; the oldest frame house in the city; the first meetinghouse; the natural feature

that suggested the city's name,—reliable pictures of such things become of increasing value every year. What wouldn't the world give for a photograph of the Palace of Charlemagne, the Judgment Hall of Pilate, or the Home of Ulysses! There are some it may be who would give more for a photograph of the main street of the town

PLATE VII. THE MILES WARD HOUSE, SALEM, MADE FAMOUS THROUGH ASSOCIATION WITH NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

where they themselves were born. But all normal human beings have some measure of interest in history. They "want to know," as the primitive Yankee used to say, and pictures help. As time runs on curiosity as to the past increases. Archaeology has become a profession. Our children will be more curious about their ancestors and their doings than we are. Every record we can leave will be appreciated.

Everywhere in our rapidly growing country the old landmarks are fast disappearing. The photographic recording of them is everywhere a duty. Such records should be as perfect as possible in the scientific sense; as literal as sun, plate, pan, paper, and patience can make them. The best obtainable prints of such subjects should be kept on file at the public library, or local museum, for ready reference.

The Miles Ward house (Plate VII), Salem, Mass., where Hawthorne visited and in the garden of which, behind the board fence at the left, he did some of his writing, is good illustration of pictures of this kind. Such a photograph is valuable not only for

PLATE VI. AN HISTORIC MILL SITE.

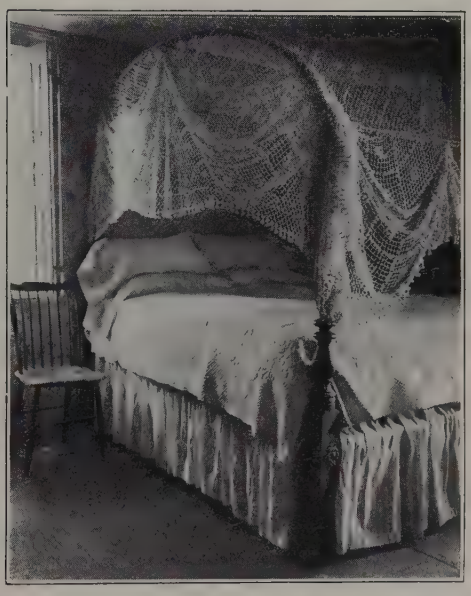


PLATE VIII. SOME HISTORIC FURNITURE.

its contribution to our information concerning a famous American author, but also to our knowledge of Colonial ideals in domestic architecture for towns. The large house, close to the street to save snow-shoveling and to allow for a garden in the back yard; the gambrel roof to provide additional sleeping rooms in the attic; the porches, built out to save room within the house and to give double doors to shut out the cold; the honest construction in wood, so temperately ornamented—because it all had to be done by hand; the enclosed orchard, for security and privacy; the guardian trees at the entrance; all are significant and most welcome facts. A strong local interest is always responsive to photographs like that reproduced as Plate VI, the remains of the Lone Star Mill, Franklin, taken by Mr. O. T. Mason, Medway, Massachusetts.

(2) Very old or notably successful new household furnishing constitutes another important field. Plate VIII, for example, shows a canopy bedstead or "four poster," that stood in the south chamber of the old Page House, Danvers, Massachusetts. For such subjects

PLATE IX. PULPIT, UNITARIAN CHURCH, COHASSET, MASS. BUILT 1747.

the sharper the definition the better, that none of the detail may be lost. Pictures of colonial furniture and implements; of fine woodwork, like that shown in Plate IX, the pulpit of the Unitarian Church, Cohasset, Massachusetts, built in 1747; of old wrought iron; of woven spreads, and hand wrought dress goods, samplers, etc., will all be valuable to succeeding generations of craftsmen. So also will be photographs of such successful modern work as that shown in Plate X. We are prone to forget that we are constantly making history. Our work today in a hundred years—if it lasts so long—

PLATE X. A CONSISTENT MODERN INTERIOR.

will be as historical to the people of that day as the old ship *Constitution* is to us.

(3) In almost every town are notable examples of historic architectural detail. School children who hear about Greek and Roman temples, members of Women's Clubs studying Gothic Art or the Renaissance, and people in general who wish to be reckoned as fairly intelligent, should be familiar with such illustrations of the history of architecture as their own town may afford. It would be difficult to find a town on the Atlantic seaboard, or a city anywhere in

the United States, that could not show, if asked by a keen-eyed photographer to stand and deliver, a Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, Tuscan, and Gothic capital, a Greek fret, a Roman echinus molding, a Gothic finial, a Renaissance pediment, and a Colonial doorway. A collection of the clearest possible photographs of such things should

PLATE XI. A CLASSIC ENTRANCE IN INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

be available for reference in every town. Plate XI shows, for example, a classic bit from Indianapolis, Indiana, the Tuscan entrance to the Art School of the John Herron Art Institute. Plate XII shows another example of photographs of this class, the Colonial entrance to St. Paul's Rectory, Baltimore, Maryland, photographed by Frank Cousens of Salem, Massachusetts.

(4) But perhaps the most urgently important work to be done by amateur photographers, especially in larger towns and cities, is the making of records from wildflowers, for use in schools. These are needed, not primarily for classes in botany, but for use in nature study, for freehand drawing, to furnish help in design, and for training the eye to perceive beauty. A glance at such examples of work in this field, as Plates XIII and XV exhibit, is enough to convince anybody of the value of photographic material of this kind.

The prints from which these plates were made came from the J. Horace McFarland Company, of Harrisburg, Pa.

An additional incentive to such work is furnished by the unfortunate fact that in many places nature study in the public schools is exterminating the rarer kinds of wild flowers. In their enthusiasm children are thoughtless. The plants are torn up by the roots. As the population in any district increases, the demand for specimens increases and the devastation proceeds with appalling speed. Hunting wild flowers with the camera is as fascinating as hunting wild animals that way, and quite as important from the point of view of conservation.

PLATE XII. A COLONIAL ENTRANCE, BALTIMORE.

The schools need also for study good photographs of typical trees, that the children may come to know them, and use them intelligently in landscape and decorative design. Such photographs are better than the originals. It is often inconvenient to take the children to see such trees, and obviously impossible to bring the trees into the schoolroom. Moreover, trees are so large, and so interesting in their growth and movement that it is often difficult for a child to focus his attention on the mass. The photograph enables him to do this easily. The comparison of the shapes of trees, so important a factor in sharpening the mental image and in memorizing, can be made with photographic prints more easily than by any other means.

(5) Photographic records of all sorts of things are valuable: from those illustrating the life history of insects, birds, and animals, of which Plate XIV will serve as an example, to those illustrating events in local history, as exemplified in Plate XVI. The young rough-legged hawks were photographed by Herman W. Nash of Pueblo, Colorado. The alluring entrance is the work of a school

PLATE XIII. JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT. BY J. HORACE MCFARLAND.

janitor who loves beauty, and can produce it. The fortunate beneficiary of his talents is the town of Brookline, Massachusetts. Records of fires, wash-outs, wrecks, and the results of accidents, are often valuable, not only for immediate use in the newspapers, but for the history yet to be written.

PLATE XIV. YOUNG HAWKS, NASH. PUEBLO.

PLATE XV. THE PETAL-LIKE APPENDAGES FROM THE HEADS OF BLOSSOMS DISPLAYED BY THE CORNUS FLORIDA OR FLOWERING DOGWOOD. BY J. HORACE MCFARLAND.

An almost unlimited opportunity for service thus presents itself to the scientifically obsessed picture maker. Every local subject worthy of record on account of its historic associations, its beauty as a piece of handicraft, its relation to the history of art and

craft, and its usefulness in teaching, whether in the realm of art or nature, is valuable and will acquire increasing values with the passing years, provided such records are permanent. To insure *permanent* prints the photographer must know his business.

PLATE XVI. A CHARMING RECORD OF THE LOVING WORK OF A SCHOOL JANITOR, BROOKLINE, MASS.

CHAPTER III

The Slough of "High Art"

DAZZLED by his success with the tools and processes of his craft, the aspiring photographer is liable to stumble next into the slough of "High Art," as it is called by the newly-come. Its more appropriate designation is simply Aht, or more truthfully, Ah! For to those who flounder in that slough the desirable thing

PLATE XVII. A FLOCK OF "HIGH ART" PRODUCTS LIT HAPHAZARD ON THE WALL OF AN "ART PHOTOGRAPHER'S STUDIO."

seems to be something to surprise people, something rare, original, unique, astonishing, something provoking exclamations without end.

Plate XVII reproduces one corner in the "sales studio" of an "Art Photographer" in an American city. It shows a flock of "high art" camera pictures, just as it happened to light on the walls. What an arrangement! Look at the frames. Mostly "hand carved." Almost every picture presents an unusual element,—an odd pose, an enormous hat, startling light and shade, erratic composition within the frame, a frame, often in color, more attractive than the thing framed.

Of course the average amateur cannot afford such expensive settings for his "gems." He has to be content with such modest vagaries as those exhibited in Plate XVIII. Mounts with elliptical openings and with printed ornaments; mounts of rough paper

PLATE XVIII. FRAMES MORE ATTRACTIVE THAN THE THING FRAMED.

stamped with an artificial grain and cut into an odd shape, with an imitation deckle; mounts made up of several sheets varying in size, color, value, texture, and character of edge; mounts on which the print is placed eccentrically; mounts with hand-painted ornament

PLATE XIX. SIX WARNINGS THE AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHER SHOULD HEED: (1) ODD SHAPED PICTURES. (2) HUMOROUS INTRUSIONS OF THE HUMAN FIGURE. (3) CURIOUS AND AMAZING SUBJECTS. (4) OUT-OF-FOCUS PICTURES. (5) GROUPS UNRELATED IN MASS TO THE SHAPE OF MOUNT, AND (6) FREEHAND "ARTISTIC" BACKGROUNDS COMBINED WITH STRAIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY FROM NATURE.

and nondescript lettering;—all such things are bad because they are too attractive to the eye. They rob the picture of the attention it alone should command.

Another group of warnings has been gathered into Plate XIX. The photographer who wishes to excel in producing beautiful pictures

is not likely to exhibit odd-shaped boundaries, an ellipse, for example; stunt subjects, like an undressed girl in the woods, or a boy swimming; surprising effects, like the snow-patched trees beside the skeleton-caterpillar tree, with the human bust emerging from shrubbery; blurs from out-of-focus negatives with no apparent reason for being out of focus; hand-drawn and eraser-mottled backgrounds —freehand settings for mechanically rendered subjects; backgrounds unrelated to the mass of the picture; or lastly, obtrusive, illegible, up-hill or down-dale signatures of studied whimsicality. All such features are defects. In a fine picture the subject holds first place in the attention of the observer; nothing is allowed to call or to pull the attention away from that subject. When a freak contour, a curious detail, an obtrusive technique, or a vain autograph, obtrudes itself, the attention is divided, the subject is robbed and forced to take second place.

Behind all these diverse activities of would-be artists, will be found, in the last analysis, either pure ignorance or a veiled egotism. Usually the performer's aim is not the beauty that is its own excuse for being, but the beauty that shall reflect glory on the discoverer and promoter thereof. His ambition seems to be to achieve something that will provoke not an inarticulate thanksgiving that so much of loveliness can exist in so small a space, but rather the outspoken query, "Who was so clever as to produce this unique marvel of art!"

The road to fine art does not lie in that direction.

A work of fine art always makes its appeal first *as a whole.* It comes into consciousness as a single undivided vision of delight provoking an involuntary expression of satisfaction; lovely! charming! exquisite! fine! beautiful! splendid! superb! or some other single exclamation. It has to endure next the inevitable mental process of analysis. The eye proceeds to investigate its parts. If through that excursion the mind discovers peculiar fitness, orderly relationship, happy, free co-operation throughout all its parts, and returns with keener appreciation and renewed delight to the contemplation of the whole, that whole is assuredly a work of fine art. Therefore, any element in a picture which blows its own horn, which bids for attention against *that specific beauty for the sake of which the picture exists,* is an upstart. Such an element is nihilistic. It is positively fatal to fine art. It must be severely dealt with, banished

altogether or suppressed into obedience to the law of proper subordination. A work of art is apiarian; it can have but one queen bee.

In photography, the mounted print is the unit. Mount and print must co-operate to produce this whole, giving an impression of ordered excellence, of quiet beauty.

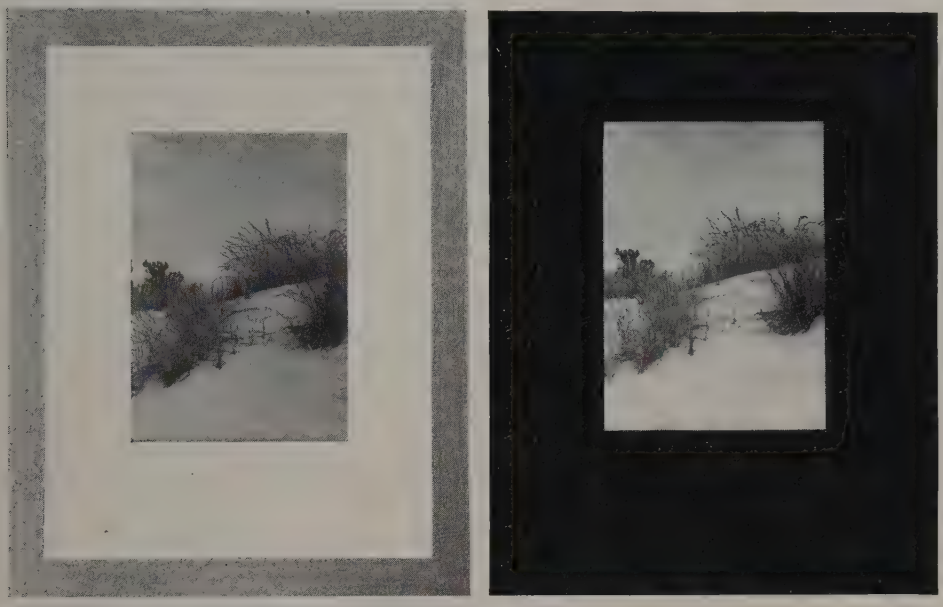


PLATE XX. IN THE FIRST THE WHITE MOUNT KILLS ALL LIGHTS IN THE PICTURE. IT SOLICITS THE EYE MORE STRONGLY THAN THE PRINT. IN THE SECOND THE BLACK MOUNT MAKES EVEN THE STRONGEST DARKS IN THE PICTURE LOOK GRAY. IT OBTRUDES ITSELF UPON THE ATTENTION OF THE OBSERVER. BOTH MOUNTS ARE THEREFORE UNSATISFACTORY.

"Of course," exclaims the self-righteous amateur, "I never use such claptrap as you have described. I always mount my prints on plain white cards"—or plain gray, or plain black, or whatever the whim may have pitched upon. But there again he is likely to go wrong. A plain black mount or a plain white mount may be more compelling than the print itself, especially when the picture is framed, as Plate xx shows. Moreover, the white mount takes the light from the picture. The whole print looks gloomy. The black mount vies with the darks of the picture and makes the whole print appear grayer than it should.* Both detract from the beauty of the print.

*It is almost impossible to believe that the two prints here exhibited were printed from the same negative and as nearly alike as possible. Unmounted, the ordinary eye would hardly distinguish between them. Here, because of the optical effect called by Chevreul "simultaneous contrast," one print appears to have been very much darker than the other.

Plate XXI shows an acceptable mounting. The tone of the mount is darker than the lights of the picture, and lighter than the darks of the picture; hence both the lights and the darks tell as accents, as the artist intended they should.

Notice also the width of the mount. Too wide a mount becomes

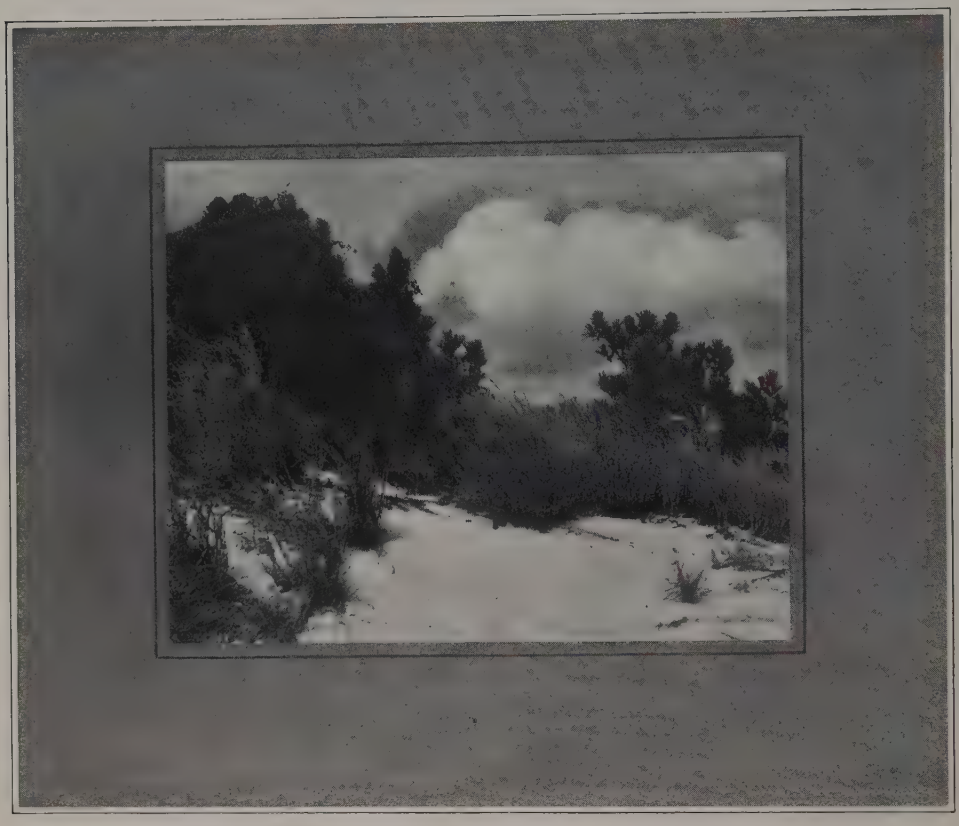
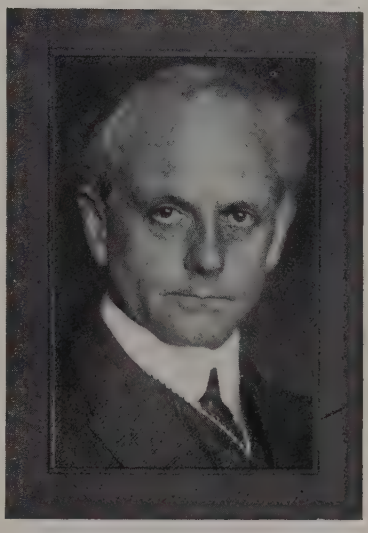


PLATE XXI. A FINE PHOTOGRAPH BY H. C. MANN, NORFOLK, VIRGINIA, WELL MOUNTED TO ENHANCE ITS EFFECTIVENESS.

an attraction, and too narrow a mount becomes an attraction for the eye, and therefore detracts from the picture. The correct width can be determined in any case only by experiment. The mount must *appear* adequate. When just right, it is least in evidence. It presents the picture at its best, and is itself content with a modest second place.

While no hard and fast rules can be laid down governing the size and proportions of the mount, in a general way, it may be said that the farther away the print is supposed to be seen the wider the mount should be. A print full of minute detail demanding a close

view, requires a comparatively narrow mount. The reason for this is that one function of the mount is "to surround the picture with a space of silence" as Ruskin said; or in other words to blot out all details in the immediate environment of the picture which would otherwise constitute its background. The eye is conscious of a larger area of the surroundings of a distant object than of an object seen at close range, hence a picture like Alexander's *Pot of Basil* requires a broad mount while such a picture as Leonardo's *Last Supper*, requires almost no mount at all.



WHEN THE PRINCIPAL OBJECT FILLS THE ENTIRE AREA OF A PRINT, THE PRINT SHOULD NOT BE FRAMED CLOSE.

The width of mount is frequently influenced by the size of the subject in relation to the whole area of the print. On this page, for example, the print framed close up, makes the subject look cramped, caught in a trap. The mount, as shown in Plate XXII, extends the area between the subject and the frame, and produces a feeling of more space and greater freedom for the subject.

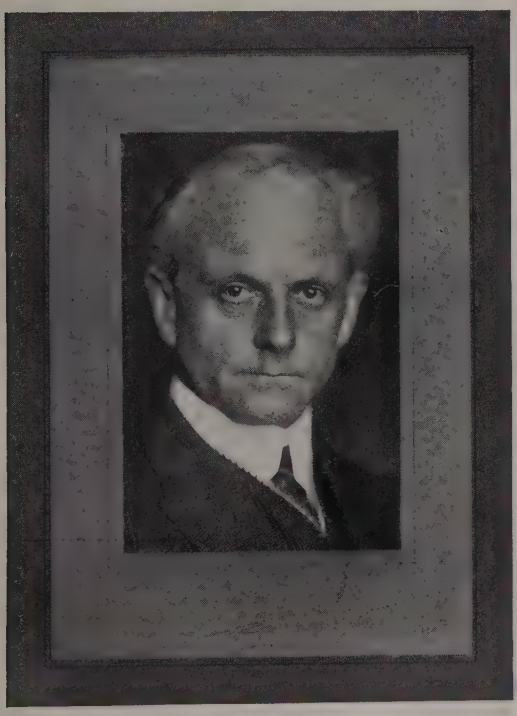


PLATE XXII. A MOUNT OF THE RIGHT TONE WILL GIVE THE EFFECT OF MORE AMPLE SPACE.

The margins between the print and the edges of the mount should vary with the proportions of the print. When a print requires little space about it, when it may be framed close, the widths of the four margins need not be varied, as shown in the small square Plate XXIII, where the white indicates the frame. When the print requires more space about it, the

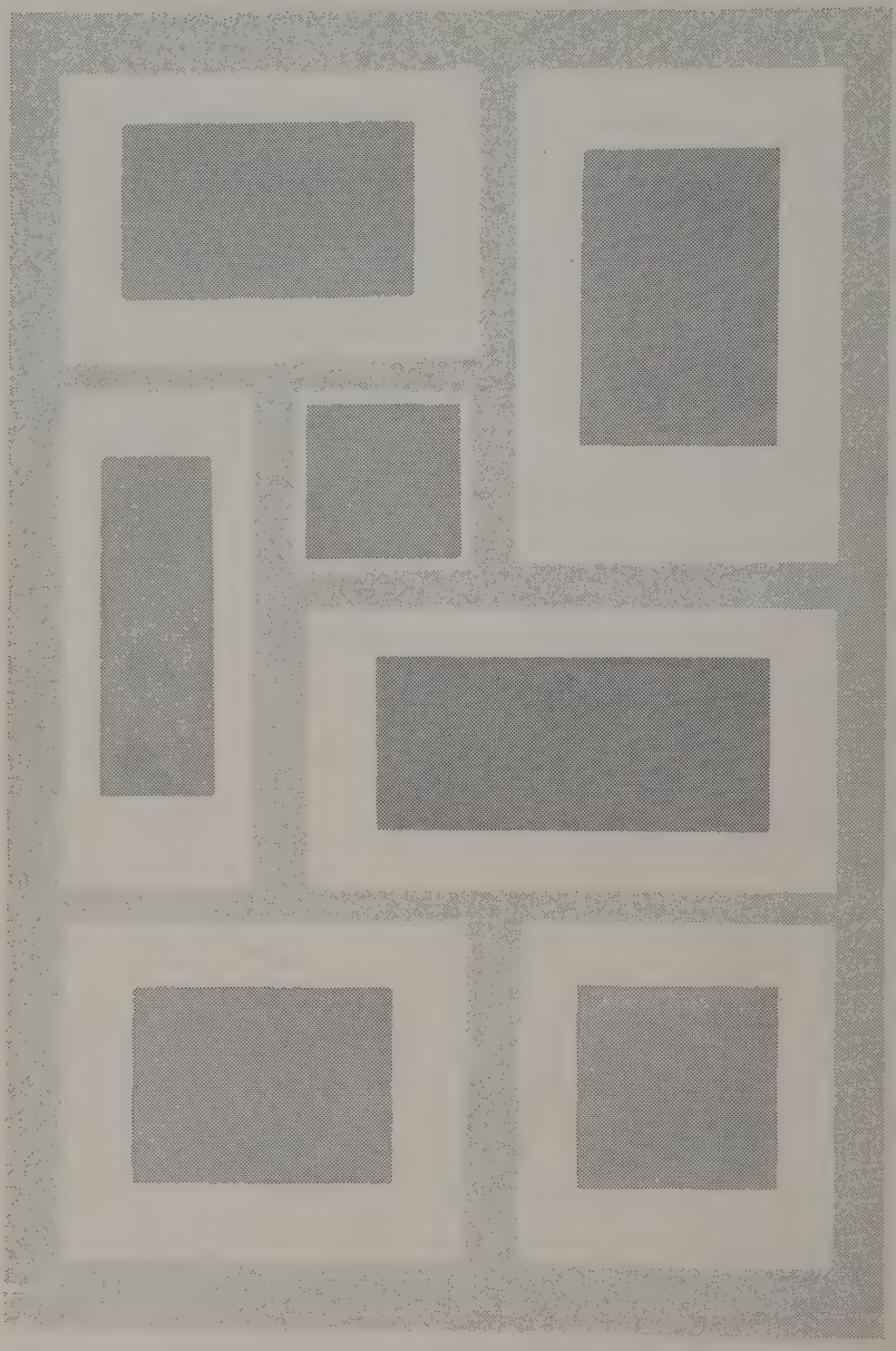


PLATE XXIII. SHOWING MARGINS WELL ADJUSTED TO THE SHAPES AND THRUSTS OF PRINTED AREAS.

lower margin should always be wider than the upper margin, and the side margins should be alike.

The relation in widths between the horizontal pair of margins and the vertical pair, depends upon the "thrust" of the lines of the print. All lines induce in the eye a strong tendency to move in their direction; and as a movement once initiated tends to continue in that direction, the marginal spaces become the shock absorbers, the arresters of the moving eye. The longer the line the greater its thrust. The greater the thrust the wider the margin required.

Equal thrust, as in the lines of a square, would justify equal margins, were it not for the fact that when the lower margin is exactly like the upper, the lower margin seems the narrower. This has to be counteracted by increasing slightly its width.

The amount of thrust in the long sides of an oblong depends in some subtle way not on the actual length of these sides but on their length in relation to the short sides. It depends also on the position of the oblong. Vertical lines have a greater thrust than horizontal lines of the same length. Moreover, the thrust of either pair of edges is increased or diminished by re-enforcing thrusts of prominent lines within the picture itself. Hence, in the last analysis, a trained eye must be the final judge as to margins.

A collection of cards of different tones of gray from white to black, and of different hues of gray, upon which to try each print for best effect; together with a pair of L's, of cardboard, large size, to determine the right size of mount and best widths of margin, will enable any thoughtful person to become keen-eyed through intelligent practice.

Lastly, the mount should, as a rule, have "something at least," to quote the happy phrase of Dr. Ross of Harvard,—*something at least* in common with the picture. Its color should echo some color in the picture; its value, some value in the picture. In the case of the Sand Dune, by H. C. Mann of Norfolk, Va., Plate XXI, the gray of the mount echoes the gray of the grass, and the black line, enclosing the print, echoes the darkest darks of the trees. Furthermore, the line enriches the mount a little, makes it a mount for this picture only, and softens the transition for the eye in passing from the print to the mount. In other words the enclosing line helps to tie print and mount together and to make them one. See also the figure subject, Plate XXII. If lights predominate in the print the enclosing

lines may need to be lighter than the mount. When a frame is added it should tone-in with the mounted print, and be somewhat darker than the mount. The frame is merely an extension of the mount for protection. It should never strive for first place. As color always attracts the eye more strongly than gray, a colored frame for a gray photograph is dangerous. *The frame must be less attractive than the thing framed.*

Fine art means fine adjustment of part to part and of parts to the whole. It means "Nothing too much," as the Greeks said. It means "the purgation of superfluities" as Michelangelo affirmed. It means the securing of a whole where "Nothing can be added and nothing removed to improve the effect," as the French say. It means for the photographer the creation by means of a print and a mount, of a thing which will give perennial pleasure to a person whose esthetic judgment has been so trained as to enable him to recognize beauty at sight.

PLATE XXIV. A VIEW. "LOADING STRAWBERRIES IN REFRIGERATOR CARS."

CHAPTER IV

The Parting of the Ways

HAVING escaped the "Slough of Aht" (Some amateurs burdened as they are with camera and tripod never escape) the determined photographer finds himself on solid ground again, and upon the broad road that stretches away toward the highlands of fine art. He is now fully persuaded that his work must have a certain quality in and of itself if it is to claim recognition as fine. He takes the vow of the artist, "I will live for beauty, though I beg for bread." With a free stride he strikes out for the hills.

The man with a seeing eye cannot go far without discovering that the road forks. A byway leads off to the *View*. Later another diverges to *Pictorial Decoration*. The main road goes straight on to the *Picture*. Each diverging path has a perfectly legitimate and well defined goal; but the three goals are often confused. Moreover there are intersecting trails from one to another. Only intelligent discrimination will keep the photographer out of trouble. Let us see what these three goals are:

(1) THE VIEW. A view, as distinguished from a picture, lacks accent; as distinguished from a decoration it lacks pattern. On the opposite page is a view. On page 44 is another view. Page 45 contains a decoration, and page 49 a picture. On pages 46 and 47 a decoration and a picture are exhibited side by side. A comparison of these will reveal the essential differences.

A view is general and fortuitous. The *scene* has its own way. The photographer is almost as passive as the camera. His aim is merely to get a good clean cut transcription of what lies before him. As a result the view is likely to lead the eye a dance.

In Plate XXIV, for example, the sky first claims the attention because it is so white and formal a rectangle. Then the eye skips to the telegraph poles in the foreground, stops to notice the two little figures dividing the lower edge of the print, and then jumps to the lights massed together above them. Getting no satisfaction there, it investigates the lights of the distant buildings, and, when it comes to the light spot dividing the right edge, it leaps back to the confused detail at the center of the view, only to be caught by the long curving lines of the freight trains and shunted off into the distance where there is nothing of particular interest.

PLATE XXV. A VIEW. "WHERE THE HORSES ARE REFRESHED."

Plate XXV forces the eye to perform a similar gymnastic. The eye finds a mystery in the carriage. The man is missing! Where is he? The eye explores the dark of the bridge, runs up the road, stops at the house, comes back to the carriage, looks in the water, runs up the other road to the left, climbs the pine trees, leaps to the maple trees, like a flying squirrel, slides to the ground, and again goes to the house to inquire.

In a view there is no evident organization of the parts for the purpose of controlling the eye, of directing it to the supreme center of interest. There is no center of interest. The excursions of the eye, during the mental process of analysis, are not pre-determined by the composition, that the eye may return to a central feature refreshed and better satisfied, as is the case in a masterpiece of pictorial art.

(2) The Pictorial Decoration. In a decoration the surface decorated, the area within the rectangle, the pattern of dark and light made by the parts, is the primary subject and aim. The decoration may have secondary aims. It may make use of the Signing of the Compact in the cabin of the *Mayflower*, or the Founding of the City of Chicago, as theme; but its real purpose is to adequately decorate a given area, so to distribute darks, lights, lines, masses,

PLATE XXVI. A PICTORIAL DECORATION BY MISS HELEN R. WEBSTER, CHICAGO. MOTIVE FOUND AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, NEW YORK CITY.

colors, that the whole surface becomes interesting and gives pleasure to the trained eye.

Take Plate XXVI as an example. The basis of this pattern happens to have been a view within the grounds of Columbia University, New York, discovered by Miss Helen K. Webster of Chicago, but that is of entirely secondary importance. The charm of the thing is its design, its dapple, a sort of freehand plaid pattern made of architectural masses and trees. Its rhythmic measures, defined by free vertical and horizontal lines, are positively fascinating. The thing is agreeably spotted. Its soft contours, darks melting into lights and lights spilling over into darks, are as fascinating as moving leaf shadows on a forest floor.

PLATE XXVII. A PICTORIAL DECORATION. "VIOLIN MUSIC." BY A. E. MERGENTHALER.

Plate XXVII is another example. In this case the name of the girl was withheld by the photographer, Mr. A. E. Mergenthaler of Fostoria, Ohio. Perhaps the girl herself did not care to have it known. Whistler was provoked with the public, you remember, because it wanted to know whether his "Arrangement in Gray and Black" were not his own mother. Why should that impertinent question be asked? That his mother posed for the arrangement had, naturally, a certain personal interest for him, Whistler admitted, but why should it be of interest to the public? The public's business was to admire his *art*, his decorative arrangement. So here. Plate XXVII is not primarily a photograph of any particular girl; it is a design, and the subject is Violin Music. The sunflowers were included to balance the attractions of the hand and of the nearer curve of the violin. The lines of the violin and of the bow were adjusted to balance one another within the rectangle, not to show how to hold a bow properly. The light and shade were reduced, so far as possible, to mere light and dark, and that was arranged to "spot"

in a pleasing way. In other words, the aim was a decorative effect, not a view, nor a picture.

(3) The Picture. The aim of all pictorial art is praise, to quote Ruskin's word,—"a man's praise of God's work." The function of the picture is to present a subject in the best light; to tell a story, to embody a mood, to transmit an idea, to record a vision, to create an atmosphere, to display a beautiful object as never before. The picture is to define, exalt, glorify a subject, in a never-to-be-forgotten way—a way never-to-be-forgotten because of the pleasure it gives at the moment and in retrospect.

PLATE XXVIII. A PICTURE, "THE TIRED WOMAN." BY MR. MERGENTHALER.

In a picture there are no irrelevant details. Every last line and dot helps to create the harmonious whole. Hear Millet: "Things should not look as if they were brought together by accident and for the moment, but should have an innate and necessary connection. I want the people I paint to look as if they were dedicated to their station—as if it would be impossible for them to ever think of being anything but what they are. A work of art should be all of a piece and people and things should be there for an end. I wish to put all that is necessary, strongly and fully,—indeed, I think things had better not be said at all than said weakly, because weakly said they are, in a manner, deflowered and spoiled; but I profess the greatest horror of uselessness, however brilliant, and filling up. Such things can have no result but to distract the attention and weaken the whole. One can say that everything is beautiful in its own time and place, and on the other hand, that nothing misplaced is beautiful."

Now look at Plate XXVIII, "The Tired Woman," by Mr. Mergenthaler. In the light of Millet's philosophy of picture making is she not beautiful? "The free and adequate embodiment of the idea," as Hegel expresses it? Her face is the supreme feature of the picture, of course; but how everything else helps!—the wilted pose,

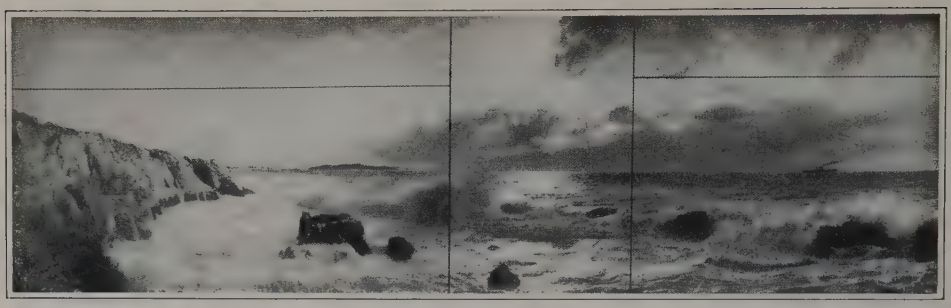


PLATE XXIX. A VIEW CONTAINING THREE GOOD PICTURES NOT ONE OF WHICH WAS SEEN BY THE PHOTOGRAPHER.

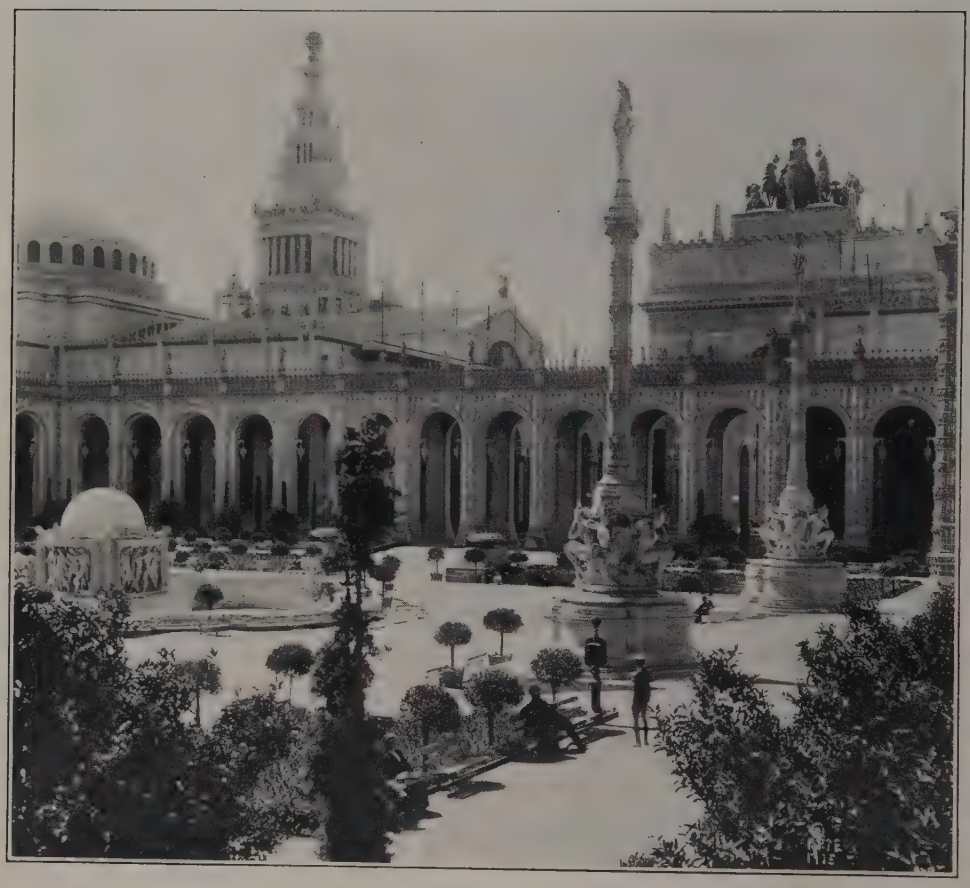


PLATE XXX. VIEW ACROSS THE COURT OF ABUNDANCE TOWARD THE TOWER OF JEWELS. A VIEW WHICH DOES NOT BREAK UP INTO SEPARATE PICTURES.

the worn dress, the nerveless arms, the gloom of twilight. It is a masterpiece of photography—a *picture* of a tired woman.

PLATE XXXI. A PICTURE. THE BATTLEFIELD OF THE ELEMENTS. BY MR. H. C. MANN, PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER, NORFOLK, VIRGINIA. AN UNUSUAL SUBJECT AT ITS SUPREME MOMENT.

The photographer who does not recognize a picture when he sees it is unfortunate, to say the least. Plate XXIX, a view at the seashore, contains three good pictures, as the drawn lines indicate. The man who made the negative seems to have seen none of these. The picture at the left might be used as an illustration for Longfellow's "Wreck of the Hesperus," it shows admirably

> The trampling of the surf
> On the rocks and the hard sea sand.

The picture in the center shows a "Sunglade," or, properly mounted to change its apparent values, "The moon walking in brightness on the tossing waves." The picture at the right shows an ocean liner putting out to sea regardless of the night and the storm coming on. Each is a picture admirably composed within its rectangle.

Plate XXX shows a view which cannot be so easily cut up into pictures for the simple reason that it is in itself a pictorial decoration rather than a picture. There is no commanding center of interest. Happily spaced verticals and horizontals determine the positions of all the principal details, and the whole has a dapple of dark and light, less indefinite than that in Miss Webster's decorative arrangement, page 29, but no less well distributed.

Now look at Plate XXXI. This is a picture of the Battlefield of the Elements. Here, just here, at this particular point as nowhere else, light and darkness, sea and land, life and death, may be seen in conflict. The whole drama centers in a fallen tree. Here is a pictorial masterpiece. It is by H. C. Mann of Norfolk, Virginia.

The Picture is the delight at the end of the King's Highway in Camera Land.

CHAPTER V

The Discovery of Pictorial Material

ONE of my art school experiences brought me such weariness that it has become a fadeless memory. We were sent out one morning, my chum and I, to make a water color sketch from nature. We walked to the wharves of the South Cove, searched every vista from Hospital Pier to the South Terminal, took a train to Neponset and tramped back to South Boston, looking everywhere for a good subject to sketch,—and found *none!* In sheer desperation we made a drawing at last from a pumping station two miles distant in a salt marsh. Neither of us liked it as a subject, but we had to bring back something. Why were we sent out blind? We were in our third year in a reputable art school. Ought we not to have been taught, inside of three years, what constitutes a pictorial subject?

Perhaps we had been taught. I have no memory of it. Certainly we had not apprehended the lesson. We must have passed that day several thousand good subjects. The old South Cove district was quite as picturesque then as now. The environs of Boston are famous for their beauty. Our way to the Neponset River, as pretty a low-lying stream as ever threaded a sea-side marsh, took us past the South Boston Iron Works, rusty old sheds with towering chimney stacks; past the famous Dorchester Heights, where the red houses climb tier above tier to the wooded summit; past the Savin Hills district, where cottages cling to the gray ledges and the tall sharp cedars stand guard everywhere; past the rounded drumlins of the harbor, green topped, with slashes of yellow gravel where the sea or the hand of man has cut them away; past groups of century old buildings with glimpses of the blue Bay between their dark walls. As I learned from Emerson's essays later, we were immersed in beauty, but our eyes had no clear vision. Why? Because we did not know what to look for. We did not know the A B C of pictures. Oh, of course "artists are born, not made" and "a *real* artist recognizes a picture at sight." I realize that to confess to having been helped by anybody to see pictures anywhere, except in gold frames, is to admit my lack of genius. And yet I am confessing in the hope that I may help some other hopeful person looking for pictorial material to find it. Ruskin and William T. Harris taught me to recognize a picture, and I believe most people have to learn from somebody how to use their eyes as finders.

Let us consider a typical out-door subject. Here, is a photograph I once took to illustrate an article on Scituate as a summer resort. It is a view on Kent Street, laid out by the "Men of Kent," from that county in England, sometime before 1628. As a view, an inventory of things offered by the old town to those who visit it, the photograph is not too bad. But is it a satisfactory picture?

PLATE XXXII. WHERE THE UPLAND AND THE SALT MARSH MEET IN NEW ENGLAND.

In that helpful book of his on Landscape Painting, Birge Harrison says that his years of study and practice in landscape composition have led him to be dead sure of but one rule. "Thou shalt not paint but one picture on one canvas." As I tried to point out in the last chapter, a picture says one thing, has one supreme center of interest to which everything else inside the frame is subordinate. Within the limits of a picture all the various elements counterbalance one another in such a way that the whole is static, at rest, complete, every part happily contributing to present vividly the subject of the picture. The aim of the picture is to praise, to exalt, to glorify that one subject. The subject may be anything,—a

single object, a group, a comprehensive movement of line, an orderly sequence in color, a striking bit of space division, a pretty dapple of dark and light, an atmospheric effect, a gleam, a glint, a reflection, a surprising combination of elements that creates a mood. The range is limited only by the artist himself. While such a variety cannot be illustrated from a single view, with this particular view we can make a beginning.

PLATE XXXIII. KENT STREET, SCITUATE, MASS. SETTLED BY THE MEN OF KENT BEFORE 1628.

In this View, Plate XXXII, there are at least a dozen good subjects for a picture. I have isolated eleven of them, which constitute as good pictures as the plate would yield without retouching, as good as nature will yield without modification at the hands of an artist.

(1) KENT STREET. Suppose I select the old road itself, a single movement of line, as the subject of my picture. The road must then be given first place. In the View, Plate XXXII, the dark mass of grass and foliage at the left, the light rigid fence making strong contrasts with it, and above all the luminous sky, are too much for the road. They overpower it. It cannot hold first place in our attention. If the road is to be the subject of the picture these must

be eliminated. Plate XXXIII is the result. I found by experiment that even that minute spot of dark, the last wharfhouse, and the masts of the schooner in the distance had to be eliminated, before the eye would be content with the road, and the picture would balance.

PLATE XXXIV. OLD SCITUATE, "THE LITTLE SEAPORT TOWN" OF BLISS CARMAN'S POEMS.

(2) OLD SCITUATE. But suppose I wish to make the distant village the subject of the picture. Now the road must go, and the top of that beautiful old wild cherry, and much else beside. Plate XXXIV is the result. It is merely an enlargement of that part of the original View (Plate XXXII) which serves my purpose.* The wharfhouse and schooner are now absolutely essential to balance the composition

PLATE XXXV. A NEW ENGLAND ROADSIDE.

(3) A NEW ENGLAND ROADSIDE. The trees and shrubbery, through which the telegraph poles march along, are of sufficient variety and charm to constitute a picture themselves. That picture appears in Plate XXXV. In such a picture the space division is perhaps the most important factor in the composition. The secret of pleasing space division is a pleasing variety, not out of harmony with the character of the subject. In this instance a large and dark foliage mass (the nearer tree) is echoed by a smaller and grayer mass. This establishes a rhythm—heavy, light, as in march time. The division of the picture vertically by the horizon, gives a long

*The spot of foliage in the middle of the extreme left edge of the picture is too dark, but to cut it off would have brought the old cherry too near the end.

measure for the sky and a short measure for the earth. The division horizontally by the telegraph pole gives a corresponding long measure at the right and a short one to the left.

(4) Uncle Nat Turner's Fence. In that portion of the View first discarded is a charming subject for an artist like Ross Turner (who by the way was of the same stock as "Uncle Nat"). The dapple of dark and light, in the picture, Plate xxxvi, is charming as it appears, and would be irresistible as Ross Turner might have rendered it in water color. The darks break into the lights and the lights break into the darks in the most orthodox fashion, giving all the parts "something at least" in common.

PLATE XXXVI. UNCLE NAT TURNER'S FENCE.

PLATE XXXVII. ONE OF THE "LOVED SCENES WHICH MY INFANCY KNEW," TO USE THE PHRASE OF SAMUEL WOODWORTH, THE SCITUATE POET WHO WROTE "THE OLD OAKEN BUCKET."

(5) "Paysage." An artist like Corot might see in our View such a picture as that shown as Plate xxxvii, a bit of country as beautiful as anything in Barbizon.

(6) But the whole of that old wild cherry tree is a good subject. In painting we might eliminate the impudent telegraph pole; but in photography we have to let it stand and do the best we can with it. Here is a poetic group, Fig. 1, Plate xxxviii. "The old resident and the latest arrival," "A mechanical and a freehand harp of the winds," "The Gossips," "Dead and Alive", "Good Neigh-

BORS!" Oh, this pair is endlessly suggestive,—the living one that has accommodated itself gracefully to its hard coast life for a hundred years, and this uncompromisingly upright one, dead long ago, but still useful if not beautiful.

(7) Then, we might have been after a picture of ELLA CURTIS' HOUSE. If so we could not possibly have included more of the environment than that shown in Fig. 2.

(8) If we were painting the SATUIT MARSHES we might select the section of the View shown in Fig. 3.

(9) WELCH'S WHARF is the subject of the picture shown as Fig. 4.

(10) THE NEW BARN, appears as the unmistakable subject in Fig. 5.

(11) THE FISH HOUSES, alone, constitute a picture, as shown in Fig. 6.

There are others, as anybody with a seeing eye will see; but these will suffice to illustrate the three fundamental rules of picture making:

1, Grasp the subject.

2, Free it from encumbrances.

3, Exalt it,—by making everything else in the picture acknowledge its supremacy and contribute to its glory.

That is what I tried to do in the sketch reproduced as Frontispiece. I was in Rome nearly two weeks, with the thought of a sketch of St. Peter's constantly in mind, as I walked and drove about the city, before deciding upon my point of view. As everybody knows, the huge bulk of the building cuts off the lower part of the dome, as seen from the Piazza, and dwarfs it. At last I discovered a view in which all the things in the foreground, instead of hindering, actually helped to exalt my subject, to make it more vast and glorious than I had ever seen it represented. That view I found by walking around the church and up the long tiresome ascent to the entrance of the Vatican Galleries. Sitting on the stone threshold of a doorway to what was then the Pope's Carriage House, I laughed aloud with delight as I began to draw. How the successive roofs made a grand staircase for the eye upward from the garden wall! How that towering stone pine with its ragged trunk and gloomy head furnished just the contrast needed to bring out the exquisite curves and tints of that masterpiece of Michelangelo's,

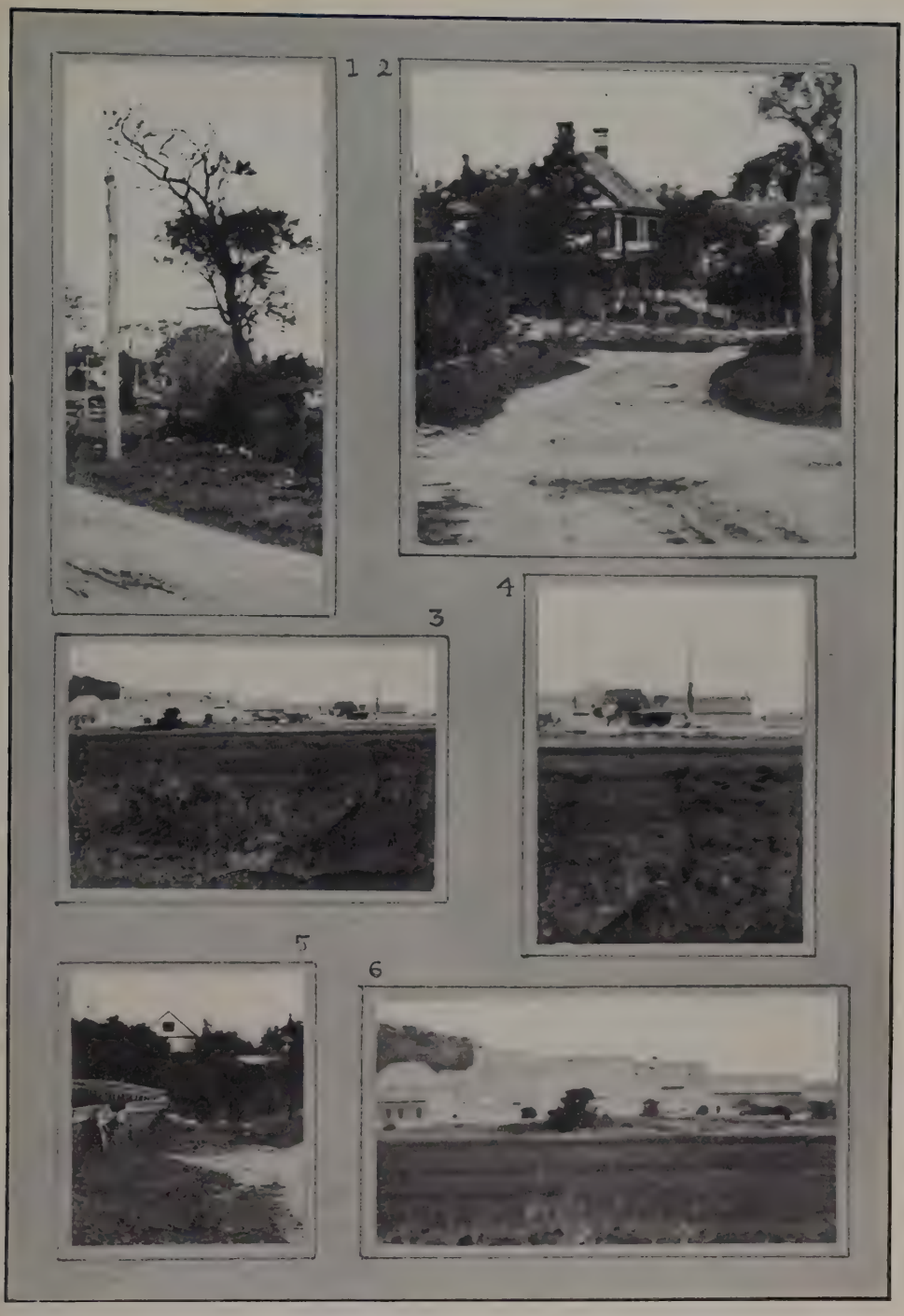


PLATE XXXVIII. SIX GOOD PICTORIAL COMPOSITIONS ALL INCLUDED WITHIN THE VIEW REPRODUCED ON PAGE 52.
EACH IS AN ENLARGEMENT OF A CERTAIN PORTION OF THE ORIGINAL NEGATIVE.

away up there, serene against the blue! I worked two hours and a quarter (but they were to me as nothing) upon the lantern and the great ribbed roof. The rest was easy. Thirty minutes the next morning sufficed for everything below the cornice of the drum, and for the washes of color to keep the pencil from crocking. Of the many carriages coming and going, I put in one, at that particular point in the sketch, to give scale. Notice that from the back of the carriage there is practically an unbroken line upward—pilaster, corner of building, side of window, columns, buttress, rib,—a great curve of force, leaping from the pavement to the dome's crown, four hundred feet above.*

The intelligent photographer like an intelligent artist knows his aim. He takes a view, he designs a decoration, or he makes a picture. He does not bewitch himself with the fancy that he can compass all three at the same time, or that he can achieve real success in any one by mere luck. Art that is *fine* art is ART. Cameras, chemicals, and printing presses can do much, but in the last analysis just how much is determined by the man who uses them. Insight, patience, and persistence in holding one's self to a high standard of excellence are after all the chief factors in determining the *quality* of the result.

*The reproduction is the exact size of the original drawing—a leaf from a sketch book. Moreover, Gatchel & Manning have reproduced it so faithfully that it is "better than the original." I could scarcely believe my own eyes when I saw that the delicate light-blue tones of the sky had been held as well as the most delicate touches of a 6H pencil.

CHAPTER VI

The Subject Only

THE photographer, now sufficiently well informed to know whether, when he bends his bow, he aspires to shoot a crow or the cat in the window,—in other words whether he intends to make a picture or to design a decoration,—proceeds, let us assume, to make a picture.

He is fully persuaded that Birge Harrison is right when he says: "Thou shalt not paint but one picture on a canvas." He agrees with Ruskin, that the aim of pictorial art is praise. That the function of the picture is to set forth, present, celebrate, honor, exalt, glorify, some one subject. That the artist's function is to make others see that subject through his eyes, to see it as only the illumined eye of genius can first see it, to see it crowned with immortal beauty.

Bien! He sees a child playing with her dolls. She is in a corner of the kitchen where her mother is washing dishes. The little girl sits on the floor with her doll things scattered about her. She is not yet ready for school. Her hair is caught up into a loose knot behind. She wears her nightgown; from beneath a fold of it, pink toes are peeping. The light falling through the back window weaves the fragment of a halo about her head. "Beautiful!" exclaims the photographer. "What a picture! How suggestive! All of Motherhood itself is reflected here as in a silver mirror. I will make an exhibition picture out of that, and win a prize."

His wife is willing. But if *her* daughter is to appear in an exhibition in Philadelphia—Dear me! Just *think* what that means! And between them, these ambitious, self-respecting, and well intentioned people proceed to create the horror reproduced as Plate XXXIX. They scrub the child and do up her hair with a big white bow. They black her shoes, and put on her best white dress. They take her into the best room, and arrange everything to show what a fine home this good little girl has. Everything possible is done to "set forth, present, celebrate, honor, exalt, glorify"—What?

Look at the picture. The doll is lost in whiteness. The shining shoes are more in evidence than the skilful fingers. The wall paper overpowers the pretty face. That great badly-framed picture on the wall, with its burden of dried autumn leaves and

PLATE XXXIX. "THE LITTLE MOTHER." A MOST UNFORTUNATE PRESENTATION.

seeded clematis, is more impudently obtrusive than anything else in the whole show. The Little Mother is overpowered. This view bears not the remotest resemblance to the original picture made by the little child happily at play, wholly unconscious of her own charming suggestiveness.

The alert photographer and his painstaking wife had a zeal for art, but alas, that little knowledge which is a dangerous thing. They ought to have acquired at least one more scrap of information before attempting "The Little Mother" namely, that the simplest way to present a subject is to *isolate* it. If they had been content to photograph even such an expurgated edition of their "Little Mother," as appears in Plate XL, it would have been vastly better.

PLATE XL. "THE LITTLE MOTHER" HERSELF.

Isolation is, then, one method and that the simplest, of presenting a subject pictorially. This method was frequently practiced by the master painters, especially the portrait painters, of the Renaissance, and is the method recommended for beginners in portraiture in the art schools of today. With only the subject itself to look at it must, of course, hold first place. A single well known picture by Raphael, the Madonna Granduca, Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Plate XLI, will be sufficient to exemplify this method.

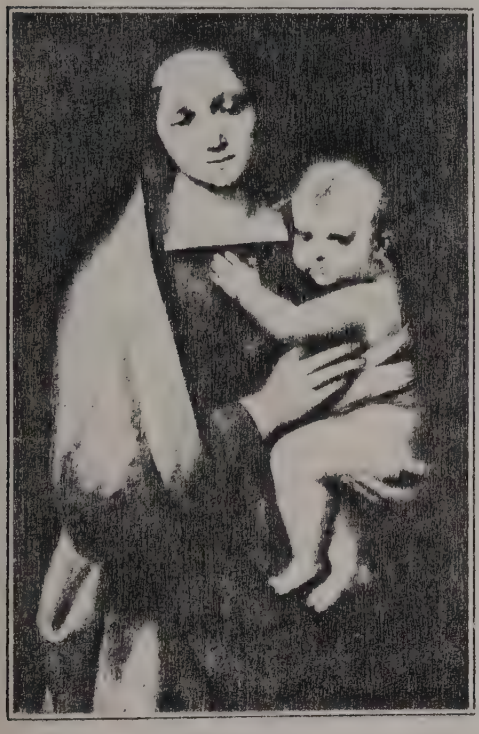


PLATE XLI. MADONNA GRANDUCA. RAPHAEL

It is the method today not only of many of our best portrait painters but of the leading portrait photographers. After the thunderous skies of the previous generation of camera operators,

PLATE XLII. A GROUP WHEREIN THE PEOPLE THEMSELVES HOLD FIRST PLACE. BY DINTURF OF SYRACUSE, N. Y.

after the classic balustrades, after the wicker rocking chairs and Empire tables, after the Italian pedestals and scenic backgrounds that were common from about the time of the Centennial to "within the memory of those now living," such a photograph as that reproduced as Plate XLII by Dinturf of Syracuse, N. Y., is as refreshing as a drink of spring water. The mother with her three children have a fair field. Only a hint of the back of a chair is introduced

to account for the grouping. If the observer does not care for these people he need not give the picture a second glance. It certainly offers nothing else to hold his attention. In the admirable portrait of a lawyer, Plate XLIII, by Helen R. Webster of Chicago, the same method is exemplified, but with the background dark, like Raphael's. As a result the man himself appears—substantial, upright, keen, with a strongly defined personaltiy—a typical lawyer of the best class. By what evil genius the photographers of the seventies were guided when they chose as models the second rate portraits of the eighteenth century, with their dramatic backgrounds, is not commonly known. They must have had, equally available, such masterpieces of portraiture as Titian's "Man with the Glove," Velasquez's "Innocent X," Rembrandt's "Elizabeth Bas," and Franz Hal's "Laughing Cavalier," to mention only a few of the immortal company. Why did they not turn to these for inspiration? Well, the work of those pioneer photographers is amusing, to say the least. That their successors are now turning to the highest in a teachable spirit, is a matter for congratulation to all concerned.

PLATE XLIII. THE MAN HIMSELF. A PORTRAIT BY HELEN R. WEBSTER OF CHICAGO.

The method of Isolation always yields good results in photographing still life objects and flowers, provided the photographer knows what particular kind of beauty he is after. To bring out the glowing loveliness of color, the soft dapple of dark-in-light in the

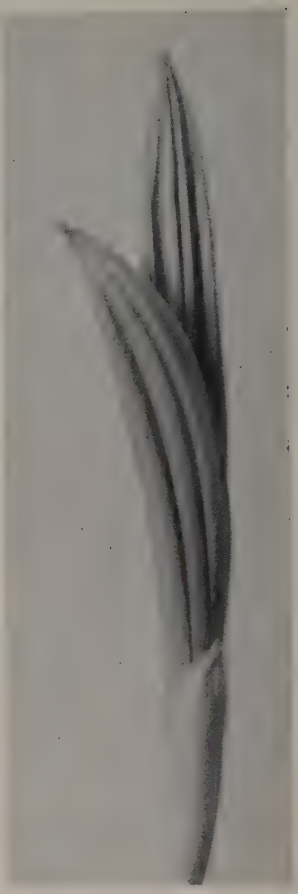


PLATE XLIV. TWO EFFECTIVE PRESENTATIONS OF THE BEAUTIES OF PLANT FORM. THE FIRST, BEAUTY OF LIGHT AND SHADE. BY MERGENTHALER OF FOSTORIA, OHIO. THE SECOND, BEAUTY OF LINE. BY WALTER SARGENT OF CHICAGO UNIVERSITY.

blossoms, and of light-in-dark in the leaves of the chrysanthemum, Plate XLIV, the artist, Mr. Mergenthaler of Fostoria, Ohio, chose a very dark background. The effect desired could hardly have been secured in any other way. To bring out the fine proportions and exquisite curved contours of the shoot of hellebore, at the right, Plate XLIV, the artist, Professor Walter Sargent of Chicago University, chose a background of light gray.

Such a treatment leaves nothing for the mind to contemplate but the subject itself. The subject becomes therefore of supreme importance. The observer must see that or nothing.

Not all subjects, however, will stand so exacting a presentation. Total isolation gives a spot-light distinction, that is sometimes embarrassing. Either the subject itself has not sufficient character,

or the artist lacks the skill to present the subject effectively without accessories.

Raphael's well known portrait of Pope Leo X is a good illustration of the first of these conditions. There was nothing in the face of the man to suggest qualities characteristic of a prince of the church, a great pope. The deficiencies in the man were, therefore, cleverly obscured by his trappings. He is represented with the insignia of his office; he is accompanied by two men of ecclesiastical importance, but his subordinates; he has before him rare manuscript books and precious jewels; he holds the magnifying glass of the connoisseur.

Any exhibition of portraits by modern painters will furnish an illustration of the second of these conditions. The "Portrait of Mrs. X" proves to be a picture of the studio wall draped for the occasion, of an expensive cloak, and of a big bouquet, with the ill-painted lady in the middle of things.

But nevertheless a subject often needs to be seen in relation to its environment. To be fully appreciated it must be seen, like a mother, in an appropriate setting, in an environment that gives to it the larger significance. Such a presentation deserves a chapter of its own.

PLATE XLV. THE MOWER. A SKETCH BY MILLET

CHAPTER VII

The Subject in Place

IN the Louvre, Paris, may be found the original drawing by Millet, reproduced herewith, Plate XLV, from an Alinari photograph. It is so powerful a representation of a man mowing, that field, grass, and even scythe, are unnecessary. The artist must have thought so, for he did not see fit to draw them. The pose of the figure is so suggestive, the action is so convincing, that the observer is satisfied at once. He does not need to be told about unimportant details. Scythe or no scythe, grass or no grass, that man is mowing.

PLATE XLVI. PENELOPE BOOTHBY.
BY SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

Such an achievement is beyond the power of a photographer. Nature is too much for him. His camera is too willing: its glass eye sees everything, and its gelatin brain remembers everything, with disconcerting impartiality. But nevertheless if the photographer is to produce fine art he must outwit Nature, somehow, and attempt the impossible so brilliantly achieved by Millet. The subject must explain itself, must tell its own complete story to the entire satisfaction of the observer, without waste of words.

Sometimes, as we have seen, all the accessories, all the environment of the subject, may be cut out, eliminated, by means of a solid black or white background. But usually, some of the accessories are essential to the subject itself. Even Millet's mower needed his scythe snath and his whetstone. When Sir Joshua painted Penelope Boothby, Plate XLVI, "Waiting to go to ride," as the children always

assure us, he gave her an outdoor background. It helps to tell us how eager she is. She could not wait behind closed doors. She must be out where she could climb in, the moment the carriage

PLATE XLVII. MOTHER AND CHILD. BY J. W. ALEXANDER.

arrived.* When Alexander painted "The Mother and Child" (Plate XLVII) he wanted us to think of them as at home. Therefore he represented them indoors. But notice how little these

*The children now assure their teachers that Penelope is waiting for an automobile.

artists tell us beyond the two main facts, outdoors and indoors. We cannot determine the kind of trees in one picture, nor the pattern of wall paper in the other. Only so much of the surrounding detail has been utilized as the artist thinks necessary to give the idea. The background is there, it has not been eliminated, it contains details which are essential to an understanding of the subject, but it has been *subordinated.* Its details have been so treated that they do not get in the way. *Subordination of accessories* is, therefore, the second method by which the photographer may insure for his subject first place in the picture.

PLATE XLVIII. VIBURNUM FLOWERS.
BY A. E. MERGENTHALER.

But subordination of accessories is easier said than done. Under conditions that can be controlled at will, however, as for example in indoor effects, success is within reach of any thoughtful and patient photographer. Consider such a fine piece of work as that reproduced in Plate XLVIII, a bouquet of wild flowers by Mr. Mergenthaler. A dull-colored, rough-surfaced jar of adequate size and pleasing shape, holds the well-arranged branches. The jar stands on a table whose surface is somewhat broken up by the natural grain of the wood. On the table a few leaves and flowers have fallen, adding another bond of sympathy between the subject and its environment. "Wild Flowers Indoors," the picture might be called.

Now look at Mr. Mann's picture of Hollyhocks outdoors, Plate XLIX. What a splendid vigor of life it exhibits! The supreme

center of interest is that cluster of perfect blossoms, central, near the top. The casing of the French window "happens" to accent still further this part of the picture; but its geometric surfaces, so free

PLATE XLIX. HOLLYHOCKS. BY H. C. MANN.

from detail, in no wise rival the charming flowers near by, in fact they make the exquisite forms and colors of those flowers more evident by contrast. Were this clump of hollyhocks isolated, had the background of dwelling house been removed, the picture would have lacked half its charm. This queenly flower has always been associated with happy homes, and always should be.

The management of outdoor subjects to secure a proper subordination of accessories is the more difficult problem.

The best plan of attack is "watchful waiting." Passing cloud shadows, rain, fog, and twilight, are often good helpers. They sometimes "lay in the background" with astonishing skill. I recall an experience I once had with a young holly tree that stood in a

clearing in a New England wood. It was loaded with bright red berries, which ought, I knew, to come out dark and snappy in the print. I tried it over and over again, always with the same disappointing result. The tree would not come away from its back-

PLATE L. "THE FAIRY DWELLING." BY W. C. BAKER.

ground of other trees. At last, one densely foggy morning it occurred to me to try once more. The fog did the trick. The woods appeared as a soft gray background against which the sparkling holly stood out bravely.

Plate L, the "Fairy Dwelling," from a photograph by Mr. W. C. Baker of Ithaca, New York, shows that the snow may be the chief factor in subordinating obtrusive detail and creating the contrast necessary at the center of interest to command the attention. This plate suggests also that the focusing and the amount of "stoping-out" by means of the diaphragm have much to do with achieving success. Look at Plates XLVI and XLVII again and at Plates LI and LII. Notice how indistinct the detail is near the edges of the picture. and how well defined it all is at the center of interest. Notice how slight are the contrasts of dark and light near the edges, and how

PLATE LI. "THE BRIDE." BY R. W. JOHNSTON.

much sharper they are at the center of interest. A similar centering of accents may be observed in Plate L. Without this the picture would have been a failure.

The view-taker may demand a plate "focused all over," but the maker of pictures knows that an "old fashioned lens" may be

best, after all, for securing that subordination of accessories which may be absolutely essential to the success of his work of art. A better illustration of this could hardly be found than "The Bride,"

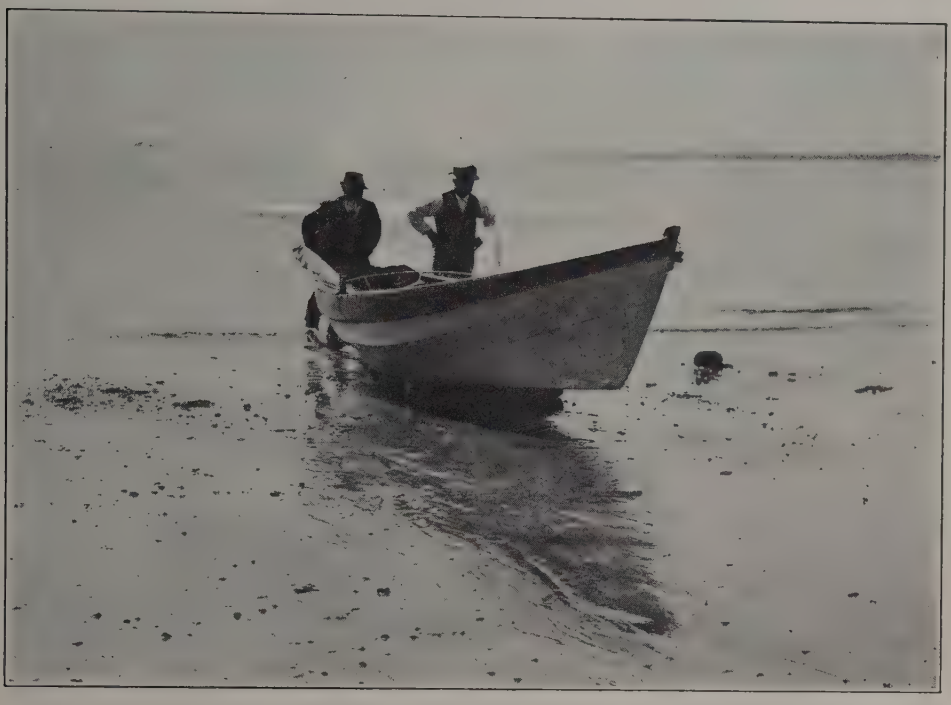


PLATE LII. "RUNNING UP THE DORY." BY NAT. L. BERRY.

Plate LI, a photograph by Mr. R. W. Johnston of Pittsburgh, Pa. Many a bride has secured a picture of her wedding gown, or of her bouquet, or of her *Mood* Descending the Staircase; but few indeed have been so fortunate as this sweet girl, in securing a picture of *herself* of almost unrivalled beauty. Every inch a bride, her face is of first importance; and where every feature is lovely, her eyes are supreme. The photographer, by skilfully subordinating the accessories, forces the observer to follow Emerson's advice to the one searching for Love himself:

"Leave his weeds and heed his eyes."

The eyes of a bride are more eloquent to her lover than all possible spoken words. They are the center of interest in this portrait—a veritable masterpiece of fine photographic art.

Plate LII is from a remarkably fine photograph by Mr. N. L. Berry of Concord, Massachusetts. Mr. Berry is an artist who finds the camera of assistance in painting. "It faithfully preserves source-material for use in composition," he says. In his hands the camera often does much more than that. Here is a pretty good

picture: "Running up the Dory." Test it by comparison with "Penelope Boothby," and the "Mother and Child." Around the edges no sharp contrasts appear, no obtrusive details. At the center are clean-cut drawing, brilliant contrasts, and significant action. The sun happened to be in the right place. Happened? Yes; pictures are always happening that way *before the seeing eye*. The successful picture-maker carries with him always an informed eye, an eye that knows what it seeks, and recognizes instantly the advent of that orderly dance of circumstance, that melodious singing together of things that we call the Beautiful.

The Preacher said in the book of Ecclesiastes, "He hath made everything beautiful in his time." The artist watches for that supreme moment. Do you recall Whistler's word about that in his "Ten o'clock"?

"To say to the painter, that Nature is to be taken as she is, is to say to the player, that he may sit on the piano. . . Nature is usually wrong: that is to say the condition of things that shall bring about the perfection of harmony worthy a picture is rare, and not common at all. . . . The sun blares, the wind blows from the east, the sky is bereft of cloud, and without, all is of iron. The windows of the Crystal Palace are seen from all points of London. The holiday maker rejoices in the glorious day and the painter turns aside to shut his eyes. But when the evening mist clothes the riverside with poetry, as with a veil, and the poor buildings lose themselves in the dim sky, and the tall chimneys become campanili, and the warehouses are palaces in the night, and the whole city hangs in the heavens, and fairy-land is before us, then the wayfarer hastens home; the working man and the cultured one, the wise man and the one of pleasure, cease to understand, as they have ceased to see, and Nature, who, for once, has sung in tune, sings her exquisite song to the artist alone, her son and her master—her son in that he loves her, her master in that he knows her."

In pictorial beauty there is always a soloist. Sometimes that soloist sings alone, but more often he is accompanied by those who hum-in a background of harmony, sustaining, re-enforcing, interpreting the melodious theme. Sometimes, however, the theme is the leading part in a chorus. But that is another story, demanding another chapter.

CHAPTER VIII

The Subject Enhanced

THAT experience with the holly tree and the fog, referred to in the last chapter, is typical. A photographer who thinks for himself is sure to discover sooner or later that while, as Emerson said, "The final stroke of grace in any work of art is Nature's,"

PLATE LIII. A CHARMING PICTURE FROM MOST UNPROMISING MATERIAL.

in his particular field he must be alert to recognize that stroke of grace the instant it appears—for it is often but a momentary grace, as fleeting as a dream—and capture it if he can. He must watch his subject for its supreme moment, the moment when all things conspire to enhance its beauty.

Take Plate LIII, for example, "At the End of the Day," by William P. Atwood. I happen to know that particular place, Beaver Dam Road in Old Scituate, Massachusetts. Under the noonday sun nothing could be less attractive than that long straight highway, with scrub oaks and bushes and clumps of commonplace trees along its sides. But at evening, when in the dim light all the confusing details of the wild shrubbery are lost, and the tree-shapes are massed into lace-like silhouettes; when the meeting house, ugly

under ordinary conditions, takes its proper place in the gray distance, adding a gentle suggestion of peace and prayer; when the fierce brilliance of the long summer day has gone, leaving its faint afterglow in the quiet sky, until the night comes down and buries all,—then the view takes on, for those who see and feel such beauty, the qualities of a work of fine art.

PLATE LIV. A COMMONPLACE SUBJECT EXALTED BY MEANS OF TWILIGHT.

The twilight has been persuaded to give the final stroke of grace also to the subject presented in Plate LIV, "The Last Load," by Miss Jane Dudley, of Whitinsville, Mass.* The selected point of view brings the figures on the load against the sky and emphasizes the center of interest, while the hour guarantees the suppression of unimportant detail, and that simple breadth of effect which mirrors the broad satisfaction that comes from work well done. No other time of day would have contributed so much to this particular subject. The gloaming is the chief element in creating in the observer the sympathetic mood which the title, "The Last Load," demands.

The supreme moment for the poor old trees, Plate LV, done to death by slow torture of wind and sand, arrived one stormy after-

*The negative is owned by the Taber Prang Art Co. of Springfield, Mass., by whose kind permission the picture is here produced.

noon when a fortunate series of rifts in the dark, driving clouds, happened to occur behind them, echoing in light their erratic forms, and keeping in step with them, in their movement upward to the left. Mr. H. C. Mann of Norfolk, Va., was there, by great good luck, with a seeing eye and a well trained camera. The result is a masterpiece.

PLATE LV. THE SUPREME MOMENT FOR THE POOR OLD TREES.

The supreme moment in Booth Hill Wood was certainly discovered and caught by Walter Sargent of Chicago University, in Plate LVI, "A Winter Afternoon." The snow simplifies the forest floor and prepares it to receive the cold bent shadows and to reflect the wan light of the low sun. The rhythm of sizes in the gaunt tree trunks, and the rhythm of values in the sky, culminate at the same point in the picture, and toward that point converge the lines of the principal limbs and shadows.

A similar subject but less promising, has been forced to yield a picture, Plate LVII, by William P. Atwood of Lowell, Mass. Through studiously selecting his point of view, over-exposing, and under-developing the plate, and painting-in with great care the spot of light, a plate made by day has been persuaded to yield the effect of moonlight. The hollow of the field and the crown of the road bring enough gloom into the lower part of the picture to force the snow-covered earth down to a value that makes the sky glow with

light merely by contrast. Again the lines of composition, in the shadows and principal limbs, lead the eye towards the center of interest, the half-hidden moon, thus contributing to the unity of the

PLATE LVI. THE RESULT WHEN AN ARTIST LIES IN WAIT FOR THE SUPREME MOMENT.

picture. Seldom if ever has a photographer been more successful in achieving a moonlight effect by day.

A careful review of these five pictures will reveal the fact that they are all alike in this: They all have a supreme center of interest, and that center of interest is supreme because the other elements in the picture conspire to make it so. In other words, all five pictures are *well composed.* In each case every element in the picture contributes its share to the theme; every element helps to give significance and prominence to the center of interest; every element

PLATE LVII. A PICTURE PRODUCED BY A COMBINATION OF INSIGHT AND SKILL.
AN AFTERNOON LIGHT FORCED TO YIELD THE EFFECT OF MOONLIGHT.
BY WILLIAM P. ATWOOD.

is content to take its own proper place in the picture without rivalry; every element says to the picture as a whole, "Not unto us, but unto thy Name be the glory."

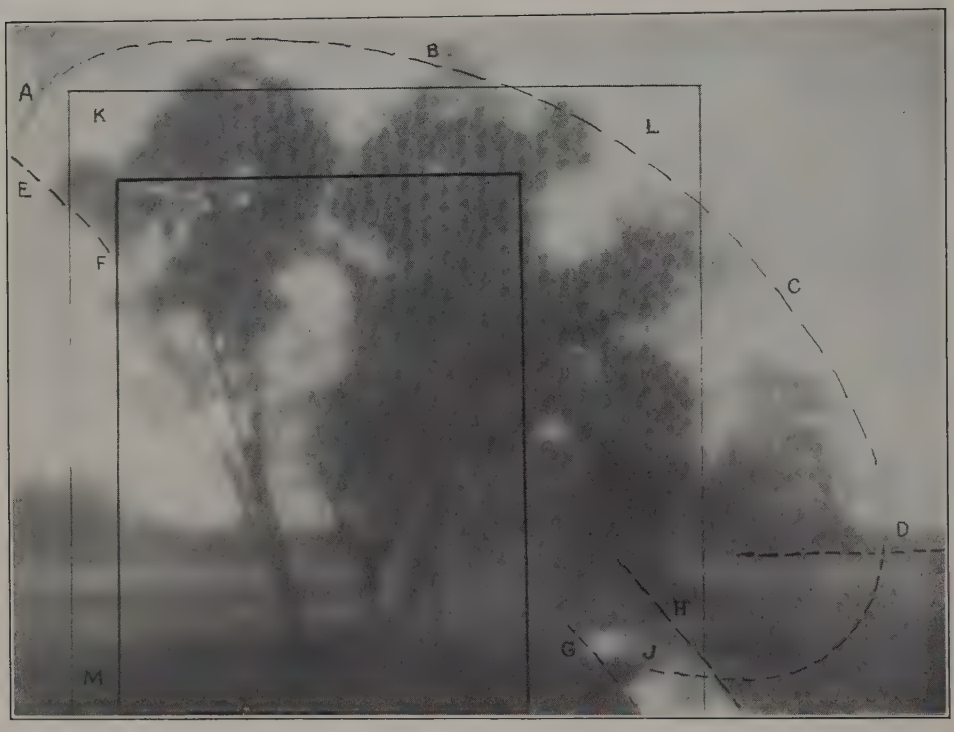


PLATE LVIII. SUCH A SUBJECT AS COROT WOULD HAVE ENJOYED.

In composing a picture the artist deals with elements which have attractive power for the eye. Let us take Plate LVIII, for example; and consider these elements in order:

1. *Mass.* That big mass of trees is an attraction for the eye—it is the first thing the eye sees; but almost instantly the eye is attracted by that perfectly blank sky, uniform in its lightness. That mass is another attraction. The plate appears about half-and-half dark and light—one attraction counterbalances the other. The result is a divided interest. In a good picture some one mass is predominant.

2. *Line.* The eye is super-sensitive to lines which induce movement. While all lines suggest movement, in a picture not all lines force the eye to follow them, because frequently there are so many related in such a way that one offsets the other, and the confused eye goes nowhere. The upper part of Plate LVII furnishes

an illustration of this. It is therefore the principal lines of the picture that command the eye. In Plate LVIII the first line that commands the eye is that of the slanting tree at the left. This, reenforced by the line of the foliage, F to E, pulls the eye upward to the left and shoots it against the margin of the picture at E. Here the eye encounters another curve, unrelated to the first, caused by the limb of another tree, an outsider, having no legitimate connection with the subject in hand. This interloper, A, starts the eye on another chase, and it slides over the tree-tops, landing flat on the ground at D. The line of the horizon now induces the eye to follow it to the other side of the picture where it finds nothing of special interest. Having hastily explored the tree-lines, the eye is next attracted by the light spot in the foreground, bounded by oblique parallel lines, G and H, leading nowhere in particular. If that light spot had been a horizontal one, located at J, and if the field at the right had presented any sort of irregularity of color, a quarter of an inch inside the margin, the eye, following the big curve A B C D, would have gone right on to the attraction J, only to be slid gently to the left by the horizontal lines of the meadow, to the foot of the slanting tree, in a position to make its not unpleasing journey again. As it stands, the line-movement in the composition, because it does not lead to a center of interest, is decorative rather than pictorial. But even so it is unsatisfactory because in that movement the whole upper right corner of the area is ignored. If the print had been trimmed to the square form, indicated by the light lines, it would have been better as a pictorial decoration. In that case the line-movements would have been reduced in potency, the corner attraction K would have been balanced by a similar attraction at J (light against light), while the attraction at L, would have been counterbalanced by a complementary attraction at M (light against dark), and the whole surface would have presented a pleasing dapple of dark and light, the dark being predominant. In other words the decoration would have been in *dark* dappled with light. In a *picture*, the line movement must lead to the center of interest or in some way conserve the unity of the whole by keeping the eye within the limits of the picture. Suppose now this print had been trimmed to the rectangular form bounded by the heavy lines. The eye, following the tree-line upward to the left, would have been arrested, before it reached the margin, by the soft lights in the dark foliage, and by

them turned gently to the right, over and downward, by a graceful reversed curve, to the other trunks where they leave the ground. Instantly the eye perceives that these principal trunks radiate from a point near the lower edge of the picture, as though they formed a bouquet held in a giant hand. The unity of the picture is thus enhanced; it is a dark toned picture—the trees are predominant; and the real subject of the picture is Willow Lace.*

3. *Sequence.* An orderly succession of elements is always an attraction for the eye. The mere repetition of units, as in a border, A, Plate LIX, induces the eye to follow in that direction as indicated by the arrow, because we habitually read that way. The compelling power of succession is greatly enhanced when the elements present an ordered variety in themselves. The movement of the eye in B is therefore in the opposite direction. In C it may be either way, according to circumstances, but it is inevitably one way or the other. In D it goes to the right. In E and F the sequence may read either way. Once started, the eye is sure to follow it to its logical conclusion. The eye sensitive to sequence takes peculiar pleasure in a disarranged sequence such as G, H, I, or J, where sequence is at once evident, but the order is not too obvious. Such sequences have a pleasing element of freedom not found in the more mechanical arrangements. These are the sequences which appear universally in pictorial art. Returning to Plate LVIII, it will be seen that a sequence of both size and value, yes, and of distinctness or definition as well, re-enforces the line-movement A B C D, and forces the eye to give special attention to the far distant elm tree, small and ghostly though it be and entirely unrelated to the real subject of the picture.

These three kinds of attractions, namely, of mass, line, and sequence, present themselves under various disguises in almost infinite variety, and are supplemented by what may be called the attraction of Contrast.

4. *Contrast.* The thing that is different, the exception, the unexpected, the unforeseen, the thing that *is* expected and then does not appear,—all these constitute irresistible attractions for the sensitive eye. In sequences like K and L, opposite, the interruption, whatever it is, becomes an attraction. In a dark area, M,

*The foreground is somewhat monotonous. If a soft light such as that at G could have been made to appear just inside the margin at the left of G, to echo the lights of the sky above in the earth below, and to perfect the balance of the picture, the plate would rival a composition by Corot.

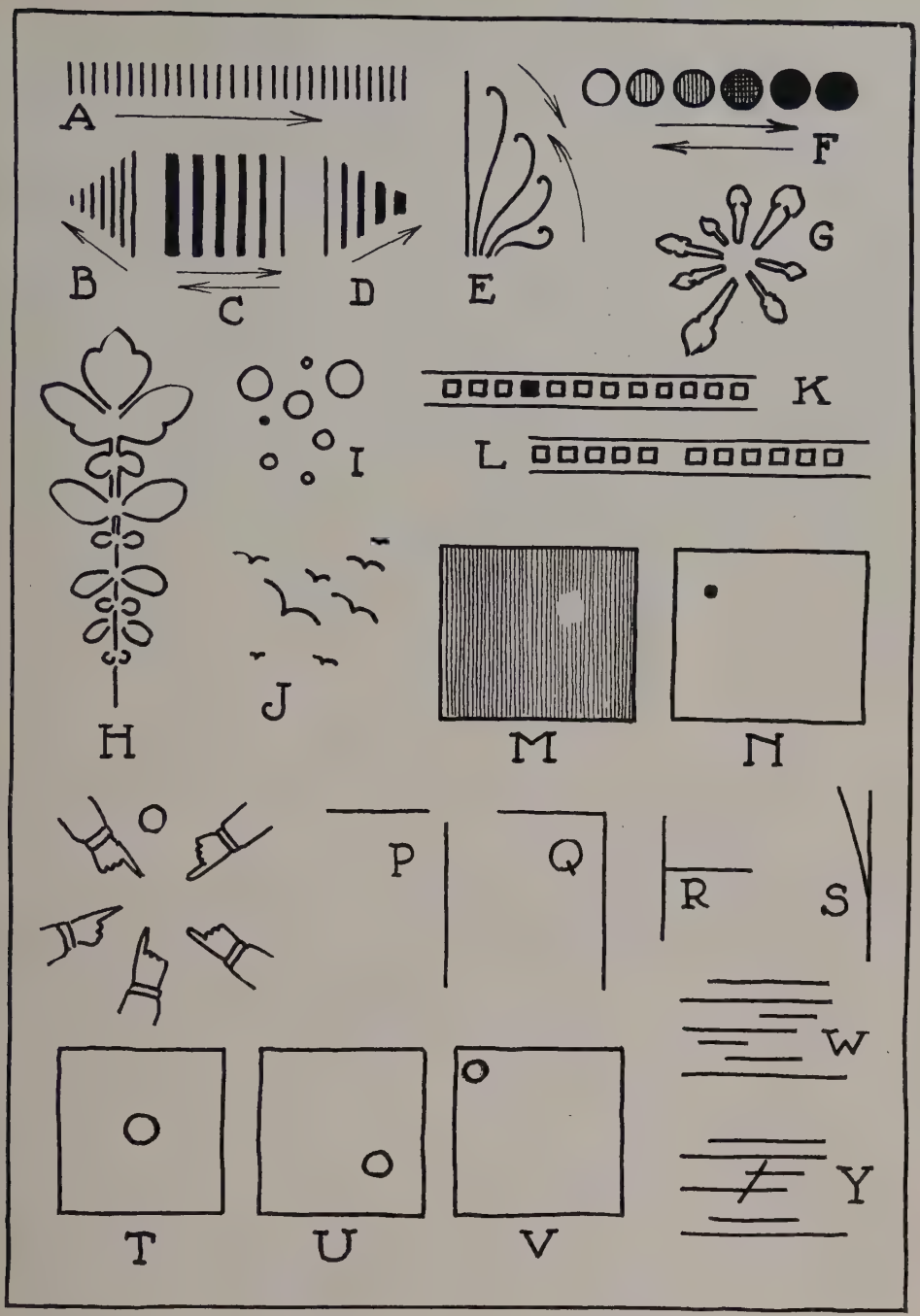


PLATE LIX. DIAGRAMS ILLUSTRATING VARIOUS ELEMENTS WHICH AN ARTIST HAS TO CONSIDER IN COMPOSING HIS PICTURE.

PLATE LX. "THE OLD HOME" PICTURE WITHIN THE VIEW OF THE OLD HOME.

a light catches the eye, in a light area N, a dark gets it. In O the most attractive thing is the empty space! In P the incomplete corner gets more attention than the complete one in Q just because it presents the unexpected. Lines which come together as at R do not claim so much attention as those which intersect as at S, partly because the eye is more accustomed to the right angle. The circle in T the eye accepts without a second thought—it is in its logical place. In U the circle attracts more attention, and in V, most of all; for in V the corner containing it has a unique and curious distinction to which the converging lines of the top and side contribute their full share. The shortest line in the group W is hardly noticeable at first sight, but no eye can overlook that line in the group Y.

The problem of the artist is to so control all these attractions of mass, of line, of sequence, and of contrast,* that they serve to lead the eye to the center of interest, to give to that center first place, to add to its significance, to enhance its beauty, and to contribute to the perfection of the whole.

Now when the photographic artist finds a good subject, discovers some object or group at its supreme moment, he is almost

*In painting the problem is further complicated by color, an element of transcendent importance.

PLATE LXI. A VIEW ON COHASSET COMMON CONTAINING A PICTURE OF A SPIRE.

PLATE LXII. A "SNOW SCENE" WITH A GOOD SNOW PICTURE WITHIN.

PLATE LXIII. A PICTORIAL DECORATION CONTAINING THREE PICTURES AND A BETTER PICTORIAL DECORATION THAN THE WHOLE.

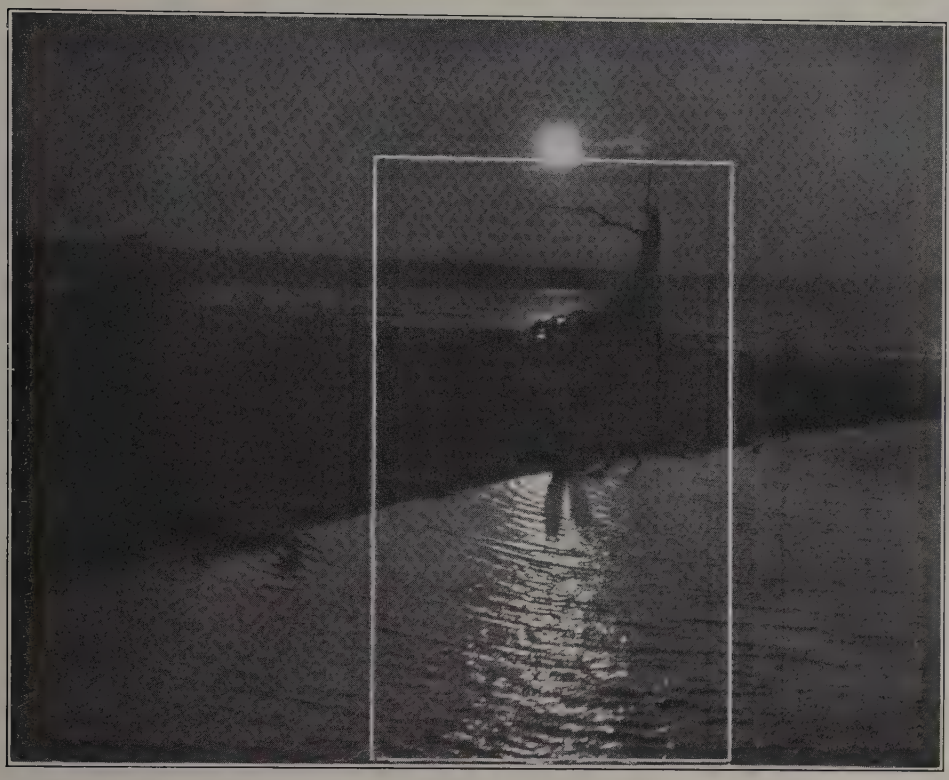


PLATE LXIV. A MOONLIGHT VIEW WHICH CONTAINS A PICTORIAL MASTERPIECE.

sure to be harassed by elements which will not take their proper place in the composition. They insist on themselves, they push themselves forward, they refuse to knuckle down to the subject, they set up competing attractions and destroy the unity of the picture. The painter can do as he pleases with these obstreperous elements. He can force them to behave by changing their position, size, color, shape, value, definition, as he will, or by eliminating them altogether. The powers of the photographer are more circumscribed. His lens and his plate are in league with the refractory element, and too often the allies are too much for him. They make a pictorial victory impossible. After the photographer has used up all his judgment, all his patience, all his skill, in dealing with the irrepressibles, his most effective weapon is the knife.

The next four plates will serve to prove that statement.

Plate LX is a view of "The Old Home." As it stands the old barn holds first place. Its open doors are the most compelling attractions; its end, at the right, is the most charming dapple of

light and dark in the entire print. The white sky is a distraction because there is so much of it. The leading lines of the paths are divergent. One path takes the eye to the barn door, another to the house door, and two others lead away somewhere else toward the left. The *picture* is inside the black lines. There the open door is the chief attraction, and masses, lines, sequences, and contrasts are as near right as possible.

In Plate LXI the subject is the beautiful spire of an old Colonial meetinghouse. The vista B is too attractive. The details above A and D are too sharp; they rival those in the spire. The foliage masses E and F are too dark; they detract from the force of the darks in the belfry. The corner C presents too much confusing detail. The spire is essentially a vertical thing, it demands a vertical picture. The *picture* is inside the black lines. The same is true in Plate LXII. Cut two L's of dark cardboard to make a movable frame and fit them over the print to hide everything outside the black lines. "The Mantle of Snow" then appears at its best.

There are three superb *pictures* in Plate LXIII, as indicated by the full lines. The entire plate is a pictorial decoration, somewhat empty in places. A better pictorial decoration, indeed a magnificent one, such as few mural decorators have equalled, appears within the dotted rectangle.

Use the L's on Plate LXIV to get the wonderful picture within the white lines. As the view stands the line movements—horizontally and vertically—are contradictory and distracting, while the moon and its reflection make two competing centers of interest. Cut out the moon, leaving only a hint of its presence, and make the shape of the picture a vertical oblong in harmony with the mass of the reflection, and the result is brilliant and charming.

In a successful composition the various attractions are managed not only so that they enhance the subject itself, but so that the picture as a whole presents to the eye a rhythmic and balanced unity.

CHAPTER IX

Rhythm

NAT Berry and I were out for a sketch in Old Scituate. The day was perfect. We had hired a horse such as artists like. The owner had said as we were about to start, "There's one thing about this animal I think I ought to tell you. He's slow. He'll bring you home all right, but you'll have to start a little early."

PLATE LXV. OLD TURNER HOUSE, SCITUATE, MASS. NOTICE THE ORDERLY VARIETY IN GABLES, CHIMNEYS, TREES AND WINDOWS.

We had started early, and had jogged along, mile after mile, too happy to stop to paint anything. Suddenly, Mr. Berry exclaimed, "Hold up; here's the bulliest sketch I've seen today; let's tackle it." I have made a pen drawing of what he saw as Plate LXV. What is there about this subject that suddenly moved Berry to action?

An analysis of this composition reveals an element which, more frequently, perhaps, than any other is to be found at the heart of what is commonly known as the picturesque. That element has been called *variety*, and *rhythm*, and *sequence*, and *repetition*, and several other things. Perhaps no one word is adequate to define

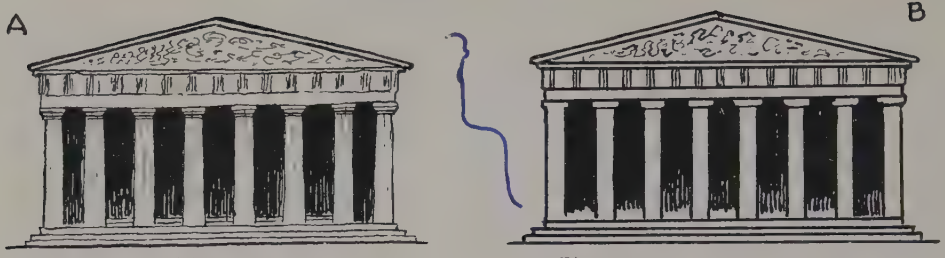


PLATE LXVI. (*a*) A FACADE OF THE PARTHENON AS DESIGNED. (*b*) THE FACADE WITH COLUMNS EQUALLY SPACED.

it. I call it sometimes *repetition with accent*, or *rhythmic grouping*, or *variety within unity*. However named it is a fundamental quality in all fine art, whether architecture, sculpture, painting, decoration, poetry, or music.

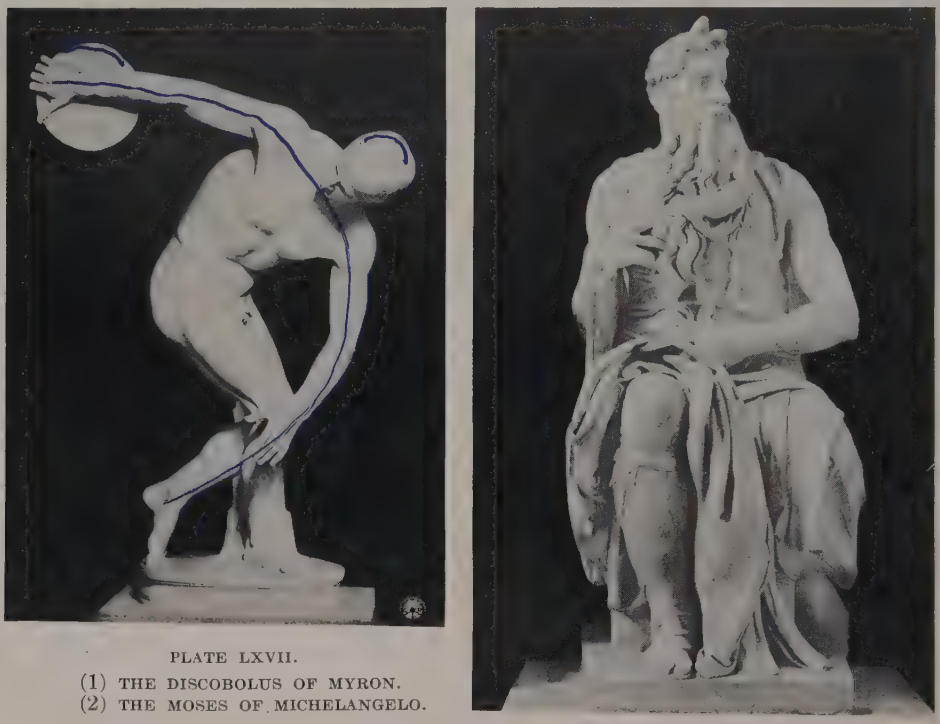


PLATE LXVII.
(1) THE DISCOBOLUS OF MYRON.
(2) THE MOSES OF MICHELANGELO.

One reason the front of the Parthenon is fine is because it presents a *rhythmic* series of spaces between its columns as shown at A, Plate LXVI. The colonnade is "phrased" like a passage in music; it presents a varied emphasis, like a line of poetry:

"I *come* TO BURY CAESAR, *not* to praise him."

It is not like B, a monotonous repetition, that might be continued indefinitely, like a modern colonnade.

Look at the Discobolus of Myron, Plate LXVII, 1. See how the curve of the head is repeated in the curve of the discus, and in the great sweeping curve of the whole figure from the knuckles of his right hand to the heel of his left foot. Look at the Moses of Michelangelo, Plate LXVII, 2. Think of the lines of a seated figure, side view. Now see how those lines are echoed in front view, in the line from the nose, down the beard and by its principal mass across to the right hand, then downward by the forearm and tablets; and again, larger, from the left shoulder downward, across by the forearm and on downward by the drapery to the left of the exposed right leg.

PLATE LXVIII. AN ETCHING, "MOONLIGHT," BY EVERETT WARNER. UNUSUALLY RICH IN RHYTHMIC SEQUENCES.

See the "Moonlight in Montreuil," by Charles Everett Warner, Plate LXVIII. Think of its triple rhythms, orderly sequences of measure. Here are eight of them, the widest or largest or darkest member of the group being named first:

(1) Houses, sky, foreground.

(2) Roofs, sky, light portion of wall.

(3) Dark street, dark portion of wall, sidewalk.

(4) Wide house wall, medium house wall, narrow house wall.

(5) Highest house (at the right), medium height (at the left), lowest (in the middle).

(6) Biggest mass on roof (the gable at the left), medium (the gable on middle house), smallest (the chimney on top the right hand house).

(7) Three pairs of openings in walls: (largest in middle house), medium (in house at left), smallest (in the house at right).

(8) Three arrangements of openings: Equal but different, side by side; unequal, side by side; unequal, one above another.

There are other orderly sequences in this picture, but these are the most obvious.

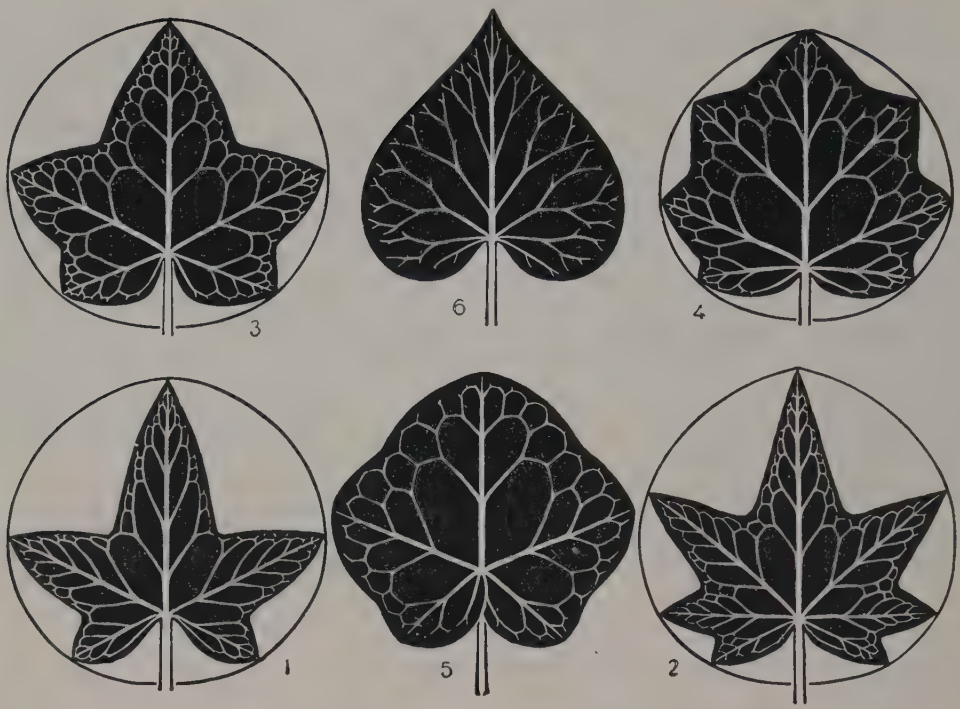


PLATE LXIX. SOME LEAVES BY MUERER SHOWING NATURAL RHYTHMS OF MEASURE.

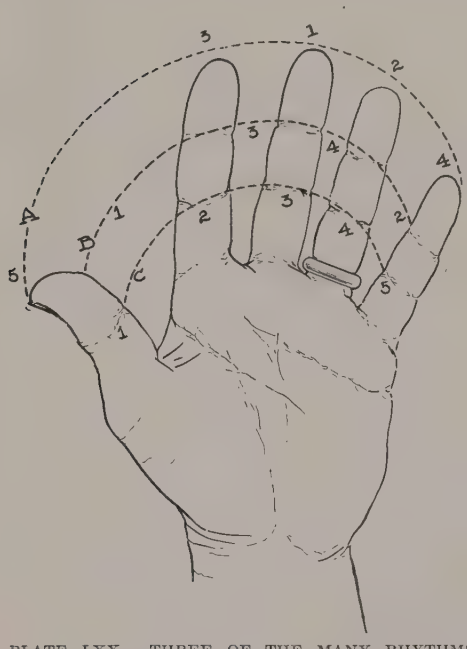


PLATE LXX. THREE OF THE MANY RHYTHMS DISPLAYED BY THE HAND.

Similar sequences, orderly varieties of measure, of character, of values, of colors, occur in every beautiful object in nature. Look at the common leaves. Plate LXIX. Notice the sequence of size in the lobes; in the spaces between the lobes, as clearly defined by the mechanical enclosing lines; of the lengths and thicknesses of the veins; of the areas enclosed by the veins.

The rhythms in leaves account for similar rhythms in the decorative foliage of every style of ornament. Look at Plate LXXI. Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Romanesque, and Gothic forms, all

PLATE LXXI. HISTORIC FOLIAGE ILLUSTRATING ORDERLY SEQUENCES OF VARIOUS ELEMENTS.

derived from the acanthus, exhibit consistent rhythms of sequences of shape, size, position, deflection, notan, and light and shade. Look at your own hand, or in this particular case, at the hand of someone else, Plate LXX. The numerals in line A indicate the sequence in lengths of digits; in line B, the sequence in the normal widths of spaces between the digits; in line C, the sequence in the thickness of the digits. In every hand there are other orderly sequences of measure in the lengths of parts between joints, in the wrinkled areas at the knuckles, in the sizes and shapes of the nails,—never anywhere two alike.

The same Rhythmic law appears in every living object in Nature. Look at any beetle, crab, lobster, spider, butterfly. The orderly sequences of measure in the subdivisions of parts, in the disposition of structural and ornamental detail, are admirable beyond the power of words to express. Make a critical study of the wing of any bird, noting its sequential measures in sizes of feathers, lengths, widths, spacings, markings; and how the relationships ebb and flow perpetually as the wing is spread in action, and you will come to agree with John Burroughs when he says "Knock at any door in the universe and the Infinite comes to answer."

The same rhythmic measures appear in all the best handicraft and architecture that man has produced.

An orderly variety within unity, is the rule everywhere. But when the variety becomes so great that it destroys the obvious unity of the whole, as in the modern new-art doorway, Plate LXXII, the thing ceases to be fine. Compare it with the Colonial doorway from an old house on 7th Street, Philadelphia, shown in the same

PLATE LXXII. A CONSTRAST BETWEEN A MODERN GERMAN DOORWAY AND AN OLD PHILADELPHIAN DOORWAY. IN THE FIRST VARIETY HAS TRIUMPHED OVER UNITY. IN THE SECOND THE UNITY OF THE WHOLE IS EVIDENT WHILE VARIETY ADDS CHARM AND DISTINCTION.

Plate. In the first the dozen or more *kinds* of elements get in the way, the trees prevent one's seeing the forest! This variety is made wearisome through a strange monotony of measure, a "vain repetition as the heathen do," without any good reason. In the Colonial doorway, all the parts seem to be rational and happy in a relationship that gives pleasure to a cultivated eye.

A knowledge of this fundamental characteristic of beautiful things will help one in selecting and arranging material for photographic purposes. Look for and secure *a rhythmic series of similar*

PLATE LXXIII. (1) *The Mill.* By Claude Lorrain. Masses of foliage, trunks of trees, parts of the mill, areas of water, contours of mountains, groups of people, plains of foreground, and boats in the distance are all triple.

(2) *Winter.* By Puvis De Chavannes. Each series (tree trunks, distant figures, foreground figures, logs, horizontal markings in the landscape) presents a natural orderly rhythm from smallest to largest.

(3) *The Village of Becquingy.* By Rosseau. One rhythmic sequence is to be seen in the trees, another in the gables of the cottages, a third in the clumps of foliage dotting the foreground, a fourth in the people.

(4) *Twilight at Valparaiso.* By Whistler. The two principal sequences are in the ships and in the clouds.

(5) *Spring.* By Corot. This picture shows everything in pairs,—a large mass and its echo.

(6) *Dido Building Carthage.* By Turner. The rectangular masses of architecture constitute one series, the rounded masses of foliage constitute another.

elements, which the eye can take in as a whole. Eight typical groups of this kind are shown in outline in Plate LXXIII, all traced from well known landscapes by acknowledged masters.

PLATE LXXIV. THE HOUSE OF SEVEN GABLES, THE SCENE OF HAWTHORNE'S ROMANCE. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANK COUSENS, SALEM, MASS.

Everybody who sees the "House of Seven Gables," Salem, exclaims, "What a picturesque old house!" Yes, it is. And why? Because, among other reasons, it is so rhythmical. Take the view of it shown in Plate LXXIV. The gables may be numbered in order of size and sharpness: 1, narrowest, at the extreme left; 2, under the simple chimney; 3, under the complex chimney; 4, at the right; 5, largest, next the first one. The apparent widths of vertical walls, numbered from left to right would be: 1, 7, 3, 4, 5, 6. The apparent heights of gables numbered in the same way would be: 4, 5, 1, 2, 3. Then notice the rhythmic sequence in the windows from the ground floor upward. Nothing does so much to cheapen and make ugly the modern house as windows of uniform size throughout. The importance of variety within unity, as an element of beauty, receives still further emphasis in the windows of this famous old house. Which is more interesting, the attic window in the largest gable, or the chamber window, partly open, at the extreme right? Or again, the window nearest the center of the picture, or the one at the right of the door under the sign board?

Everywhere and always, in form, in notan, in color, that object is most beautiful which exhibits the greatest consistent variety within an obvious unity. In the case of a single object, a tumbler, standing, within a rectangular enclosing line, for example, the aim is to establish a similar rhythmic sequence among all the elements—rectangle of tumbler, of enclosing lines, of foreground, of background areas to right and left. "Space relations" are rhythmic sequences in areas.

The amateur must achieve *unity in form* though he have to work on squared paper to be sure of it. Michelangelo can retain unity in form even when he decorates a Sistine ceiling. The amateur must achieve *unity in color* though he have to hold to a monochromatic harmony to be sure of it. Tintoretto can retain unity in color even when he paints a Miracle of St. Mark.

If your work, whatever it be, possesses *unity*, you are an artist. Your *greatness* as an artist is measured largely by the amount of variety you can put into your work without destroying its unity.

Looking intelligently for consistent rhythms and manipulating material to secure them will help the photographic artist to achieve beauty in the realm of pictorial art.

PLATE LXXV. AN UNUSUAL AND EFFECTIVE DECORATIVE PICTURE, BY ERNST LIEBERMANN, IN WHICH A SIMPLE LITTLE BIRD, THE CENTER OF INTEREST, IS SO PLACED AND ACCENTED AS TO BALANCE A LANDSCAPE OF EXTRAORDINARY ATTRACTIVE POWER.

CHAPTER X

Balance

A MASTERPIECE of pictorial art is complete in itself. Within its frame lines the observer sees a finished creation, and behold it is very good. The exploring eye has no desire to peep outside the limits set by the artist. Where that road comes from (Plate LXXX) matters not; where it goes to is of no consequence; this present portion of it is enough; here is a veritable land of the Lotus Eaters; we share the sigh of Dr. Watts:

> My soul would ever stay
> In such a frame as this;
> And sit and sing itself away
> To everlasting bliss.

This mood, induced by a work of art, is curiously complex. It is a blend of activity and passivity. We are at once excited and soothed by the beauty before us. We are moved to investigate every nook and corner of the picture while we accept without question whatever the artist has ordained. Our imagination takes wings, the picture becomes a point of departure, we have new thoughts and fresh dreams; but somehow we never get away from the picture itself. It enslaves us. As Emerson put it: "New born, we are melting into nature again."

The work of art like Longfellow's *Lady Wentworth*, is "a vision, a delight and a desire," but a desire which instantly fades into a fresh delight and that in turn into a more satisfying vision. We might salute the work of art as Emerson saluted Beauty herself:

> I drank at thy fountain
> False waters of thirst,
> Thou intimate stranger
> Thou latest and first.

This sense of completeness, finality, detachment, self-sufficiency, which a work of fine art first and last conveys is attributable in part, at least, to what is commonly called *Balance*.

Balance means such an adjustment of part to part, of attraction to attraction, that the picture appears to be in stable equilibrium. In a balanced picture every element seems to be in exactly its own proper place, and content to stay there forever. There is no apparent

PLATE LXXVI, A BALANCED, AND PLATE LXXVII, AN UNBALANCED COMPOSITION. THE FIRST BY ERNST LIEBERMANN. THE SECOND BY A PHOTOGRAPHER WHO SHALL BE ANONYMOUS.

PLATE LXXVIII. A WELL BALANCED COMPOSITION BY CHARLES WELLINGTON FURLONG.

crowding, no apparent pushing or pulling, no rivalry; everything shares in the universal content that reigns eternally within that little quadrangular universe.

Balance has often been described as an equalization of opposing weights. Equal weights balance at equal distances from the point of support, as in the primitive scales; and unequal weights inversely at unequal distances, as in the steelyard; but this is a crude illustration when the elements of a picture are concerned. In a picture it is never balance of mere mass that has to be considered.

By reference to Plate LIX, page 83, it will be seen that not only size and contrast constitute attractions for the eye, but movement, sequence, angle, complexity, isolation, proximity, logical position, and the unexpected. All these terms interpreted concretely, as in Plate LXXV, mean that the white horizon and the lines of surf, the succession of headlands, and the road in the corner, the crags that make up the headland in the middle distance, the bird all alone against the white of the great cloud, the white castle so near the frame, the wave breaking against the headland, and again that surprising bird, are all attractions for the eye. But furthermore the empty spaces are in themselves attractive by contrast with the spaces filled with detail. The suggested distance lures the eye. The exquisite detail in the bird gives him still further importance. Indefinable psychological elements enter in to complicate the conditions. Balance

PLATE LXXIX. THE MOURNING VICTORY OF THE MELVIN MEMORIAL, SLEEPY HOLLOW CEMETERY, CONCORD, MASS. BY DANIEL CHESTER FRENCH. AN ORIGINAL AND STRIKINGLY BEAUTIFUL WELL BALANCED COMPOSITION

PLATE LXXX. THE KINDLY POPLARS. BY A. E. MERGENTHALER.

PLATE LXXXI. PARK STREET SPIRE FROM THE OLD GRANARY BURYING GROUND, BOSTON. BY JESSIE TARBOX BEALS. THE ARTIST'S CHOICE OF SEASON, BOTH IN THIS PICTURE AND IN THAT OPPOSITE, IS SUPREMELY IMPORTANT.

can never be fully established in a picture by rule of thumb, or by the higher mathematics. It must be felt. But the final result of all adjustments is a composition which fully satisfies the trained eye and the sensitive spirit. The center of interest in the picture, the supreme attraction, may be in one corner as at A, above the willow, Plate LXXVI, but the point about which all attractions of every kind are balanced, B, is invariably on the vertical center line of the area, and usually somewhat above its geometric center, C.

The photographer who produced the headland in Plate LXXVI disregarded all this. His center of interest is divided, A and A; his center of Balance is somewhere near B, perhaps it is even lower on account of the immense pull of the ripples in the lower left corner. It certainly is not above the geometric center C. But look at Plate LXXIX. Daniel Chester French, in his epoch-making Melvin Memorial, Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, Concord, has balanced a whole figure with a sparkling spray of laurel. And notice how high the center of balance is,—almost as high as the center of interest. Charles Wellington Furlong who made the negative for Plate LXXVIII, adjusted the jugs on the seat that they might add the greatest possible weight to the attraction of the pan on the wall, and then *cut the pan in two with his margin line* to give it additional attraction for the eye, in order to bring the whole composition into balance. Mr. Mergenthaler, in Plate LXXX, has balanced the mass and dapple of his Poplar Trees with an auto supplementing a most alluring vista. The pull of that long road is immense. Hide the right third of the picture with a card and observe the unbalanced effect of the left two-thirds.

Plate LXXXI, Park Street Spire from Old Granary Burying Ground, Boston, a photograph by Jessie Tarbox Beals of New York, is dim, but it is the center of interest. The rows of dark gravestones force the eye to the tree trunk at the right. Here it proceeds upward, boosted by the vertical line of the stones below. The oblique line of the first dark limb switches the eye toward the spire. The monument and the vertical trees near it help the eye upward, and the limbs against the sky around the spire all aid in directing the eye to its goal. All this activity of elements in the right half of the picture is well balanced by the checkered masses in the left half. Of course a painter would have emphasized the upper branches of the lefthand tree which diverge towards the right, that the tree

as a whole might shoot the eye into the picture instead of out of it. But the photographer cannot take such liberties with nature. That is one of his limitations,—fortunately, or unfortunately, according to the point of view.

PLATE LXXXII. WINTER EVENING, LOUISBURG SQUARE, BOSTON. BY JESSIE TARBOX BEALS.

It would be difficult to produce a more pleasing example of balance than the "Louisburg Square" composition, Plate LXXXII, by Jessie Tarbox Beals. The pull of the mysterious darks at the left is balanced by the pull of the subtly varied lights at the right. The lure of the opening *around* the fence at the right is sufficient to counterbalance the tug of the old limbs against the sky. Cover the right quarter of the picture and see how unsatisfactory the remaining

three-quarters instantly becomes. The composition as it stands is admirable from every point of view. It is charmingly decorative in its space divisions, and quite as charmingly pictorial in its rhythm of dark and light. Technically it approximates perfection.

If "conduct is three-fourths of our life and its largest concern" as Matthew Arnold affirmed, then Composition is three-fourths of pictorial art and the largest concern of the photographer.

CHAPTER XI

The Sirens

WHEN the photographic artist feels sure of himself, when he can calculate in advance just what he can get out of a given subject, then he is wide open to the wiles of some of the Sirens who watch for the souls of photographers.

There are at least four of these sisters who have seduced many a good man, injured his reputation, and reduced his bank account. Their names are Nudity, Antiquity, Illustration, and Expression.

Nudity would persuade the photographer that clothing is a foe to fine art. At her suggestion he begins by stripping his own children and making pictures of them in various unusual attitudes. Plate LXXXIII is an example. Having followed the Siren thus far, her next suggestion is not unwelcome. If a young woman can only be persuaded to remove her clothing and allow herself thus to be photographed, the result will startle the public and win the applause of the artists.

Now the simple fact is that the naked is never the beautiful. The famous works of art in the realm of the nude, such, for example, as the Aphrodite of Praxiteles, the Reclining Venus by Titian, The Source by Lefebvre, are not literal transcripts from nature. In every case the forms have been purged from all accessories which would detract from the enjoyment of those beauties of proportion, of contour, and of lustre, which approximate most closely their

PLATE LXXXIII. A NUDE WITH UNFORTUNATE ACCENTS.

supreme manifestation in the body of a young woman. The artist, perceiving these exquisite qualities, proceeds to reveal them. He ignores this disfiguring wrinkle of flesh, that blemish of color, this distracting physiological mark, that accidental variation from a cherished ideal, and puts into his marble or upon his canvas, only that which might be called a concrete example of abstract beauty.

The camera, however, uses no judgment. Look at the nude boy. The most attractive spot, his black hair, is of the least importance. The strongest accents in the body made by the creases of flesh are exactly where they should not be for esthetic effect. The wrinkles at the ankles caused by the pose, detract from the beauty of the sturdy legs. This is not art; this is an inventory!

Moreover, nakedness in our day is not happy in its connotations. The ordinary clean minded person suddenly confronted with nudity is somewhat embarrassed, for the moment. It is like surprising a person in a bath tub, or when changing his underclothing. The degree of this embarrassment is in direct proportion to the literalness of the delineation. The photograph is, therefore, the most objectionable expression of the nude.

Some of the more sensitive photographers, perceiving this fact, have placed their nude model within the calculated gloom of the studio, or in the dim light of a pine forest, or in the hazy atmosphere of the twilight or the dawn, or under the witchery of moonlight. Individual peculiarities and irrelevant details are thus reduced to the minimum. But even so the beauty that remains is seldom sufficient to be its own excuse for being. The glass-eyed camera persists in reporting the superficial facts. It cannot, like the keen-eyed artist, disentangle the beautiful from the accidental, and forgetting all else, display the transcendent beauties of the nude human figure so that they satisfy the sensitive spirit.

Antiquity persuades the photographer that the former days were better than these. She leads him to believe that a Roman toga is preferable to an opera cape; that a tapestried wall is a better background for a head than cartridge paper; and that a stage coach is a more picturesque subject than the Twentieth Century Limited. In a word, she persuades him to believe that beauty is to be found "anywhere but here."

Under this delusion the photographer arranges "living pictures" —tableaux based on famous paintings—and proceeds to make plates

PLATE LXXXIV. THE ORIGINAL PICTURE AND AN ATTEMPT TO REPRODUCE IT BY PHOTOGRAPHY.

from them. Success lies in achieving a momentary deception, Plate LXXXIV. The photographer wins applause for his cleverness; but his picture fails to give pleasure as a thing of beauty. Again, Antiquity lures the photographer to Italy or Normandy, old countries made familiar by painters. But he finds there too often only the commonplace, having but the temporary interest of the unfamiliar.

The old is not necessarily the beautiful. In picture making, old or new makes but little difference. It is the artist who scores, every time. If he is sensitive to Beauty, he finds it everywhere, and if he is skilful he puts it into his pictures. Prof. Ellsworth Woodward, the genuis behind the artistic triumphs of Newcomb College, tells his students that if they cannot find beauty in any back street in New Orleans, they would not find it on the main boulevard of the New Jerusalem!

Illustration is the siren that persuades the photographer to study the Courtship of Miles Standish or the Lay of the Last Minstrel or some other literary success, and to work out a set of illustrations for it. He searches the region 'round for an appropriate landscape background. He lies in wait for suitable models. He

PLATE LXXXV. THE WITCH. A CLEVER COMPOSITION BUT NOT QUITE CONVINCING.

spends good dollars on far-fetched draperies and other accessories. He lavishes time on posing and experimenting for effects. And the result is often at best but a disappointment.

A literary masterpiece creates an atmosphere, a mood of its own, in the mind of the reader. Every mental picture called into being by the words is colored by that mood. The word-picture has a light that never was on sea or land. It is not a material thing but a spiritual thing, a product of the constructive imagination. The process is magical. The original material elements suffer a sea-change; they are transmuted, given a spiritual body, so to speak, that swims free within the alembic of the mood induced by the masterpiece. The true illustration reflects this totality, the scene within the mood. Such illustrations can come only out of the mind of the artist. While they may suggest the solid earth they are not of it. They are born of the spirit.

The attempts of the camera, in the realm of illustration, are "clogged with the polutions of mortality." One cannot escape the

PLATE LXXXVI. THE ORIGINAL PICTURE AND A MODERN PHOTOGRAPHIC IMITATION.

feeling that the Witch, for example, Plate LXXXV, beautiful as she is, was posed for the occasion, and was conscious of it. She is hardly a free self-active personality voluntarily surrendered to the spirit of the occasion. The picture is not an illustration. It contains source material which might be transmuted into an illustration by an artist unhampered with a camera.

Expression, the fourth siren, is the demon of the movies. She, like her sister Illustration, induces the photographer to rival the creative artist. She believes that an emotion can be produced upon demand, and that a counterfeit cannot be detected. Plate LXXXVI shows Bodenhausen's *Nydia*, the blind girl of Pompeii, and a photographer's attempt to express blindness. What a difference! Nydia is blind; the other girl has her eyes shut. Nydia's pose expresses caution and solicitude; the other girl's is entirely self conscious. Nydia is moving; the other girl is standing still. Nydia has a

PLATE LXXXVII. A PHOTOGRAPHIC ATTEMPT, THE ORIGINAL, AND ANOTHER ATTEMPT.

beautiful face; the face of the other would be better looking if it were not so foreshortened. Bodenhausen has preserved the beauty of porportion in the face, notwithstanding the pose of the head,—a thing no camera can do. The artist's Nydia is blindness expressing itself; the other is a model trying to assume a condition she has never experienced. Consider another example, Plate LXXXVII. In the center is a Magdalene by Guido Reni. On either side is a photographic imitation. Just look at them! "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." "There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body." The camera *has* to deal with the physical; only the spirit of man can deal successfully with the invisible things of the spirit, and reveal them to men.

And yet, some of the best work done by modern photographers is in the realm of Expression. It comes for the most part, by good luck. In the case of the adoring child, by W. Chauncy Langdon, Plate XC, page 115, being a child she was less self-conscious than an adult, and the photographer happened to expose the plate at precisely the right moment. How much better the picture would have been without the fake halo and wings!

In portrait photography the expression is all important. Success lies, however, in establishing conditions which call forth, involuntarily, a characteristic expression of personality, not in fixing an arbitrary pose and commanding the subject to look pleasant. The unfortunate fact is that when the genuine emotion desired by the photographer is present for an instant his camera usually fails

PLATE LXXXVIII. A STUDY IN EXPRESSION. BY HERBERT G. FRENCH, CINCINNATI.*

to act; and that the moment the photographer says "That expression is fine; hold it," it ceases to be genuine. No person of my acquaintance has coquetted more successfully with the Sirens, than Herbert G. French of Cincinnati. The "Mater Dolorosa" reproduced herewith is as good an example as I can find of approximately genuine and, therefore, passably good expression of sentiment for the purposes of photography.

*This is far below the original in effect. The original print is as delicate in tone as a fleecy cloud—merely a suggestion of reality, almost pure spirit!

PLATE LXXXIX. GRIEF. A PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTINIQUE SANCIER, NEW YORK CITY.

While facial expression is such a will-o-the-wisp, bodily expression is more manageable. Plate LXXXIX by M. Sancier, is a notable triumph in this realm. The figure presents all that the mind needs to apprehend the emotional state. Peculiarities of person that might prove distracting have been skilfully avoided. The black and white of the costume, and the absence of all finery, as well as the pose of the figure, help to create the mood demanded by the subject. The rhythms of dark and light are pleasing; the balance of attractions is perfect; the technique seems genuine—legitimate photographic technique—and that, too, contributes to the creation of the appropriate emotional mood. The picture is a masterpiece. It is well to note the fact that facial expression has no part in this triumph.

PLATE XC. ALMOST A COMPLETE SUCCESS.

Nudity, Antiquity, Illustration, and Expression, sirens indeed, enticing the young photographer to leave the safe path to photographic success, may be outwitted by older and wiser men. Ulysses always pulls through triumphantly, where hundreds of his companions less astute, less courageous, and more feeble of will, fall by the way. It may be that photography is destined to wrest some of its most distinguished laurels from the sirens themselves.

CHAPTER XII

Harmony

THE last word in both fine art and photography is *Harmony*. "The picture must sing," John Enneking used to say. Just as one's attention in a noisy street is suddenly arrested by a rich chord streaming through some open church door, so amid the usual haphazard combinations of pictorial elements, a beautiful picture arrests and thrills the sensitive spirit. Without stopping to analyze it we accept it with pleasure.

"Right you are!" exclaims the "born artist"; "then why analyze it? 'Analysis is the death of sentiment'; why not accept the lovely thing just as it is, and be thankful?" The answer is, "You may accept it and be thankful, if that will satisfy you. But some musician made a study of harmony, in order that he might produce such chords, and 'the greater the knowledge the greater the love,' according to Leonardo, and therefore I wish to know as well as to feel, that I may become a more appreciative listener."

Harmony means the just adaptation of parts to each other, congenity, consistency. The harmonious whole "holds together," as the artists say; or as Dr. Ross of Harvard puts it, "All the parts have something at least in common."

That "something" may be any one or all of a number of qualities such as dark-and-light, color, mass, arrangement, movement, character of technique, etc., or almost intangible qualities such as those vaguely classified as sentiment or mood.

The photographer, confined for the present to tones of one color, has practically no difficulties in securing color harmony. His paper-maker attends to that. Varying tones of gray—neutral, warm, or cool gray—insure pictures with "something at least in common." A good photograph is always, therefore, "not too bad" in color, unless unfortunately mounted or framed.

The photographer's difficulties lie mostly in the realm of form. The problem is to secure, through the adjustment of all the parts to one another *and to the subject of the picture*, a whole which creates the appropriate mood in the observer.

Perhaps an illustration or two in the realm of poetry will help to make this clearer in the realm of photography.

When some wise reformer wished to make people think about the importance of individual effort in civic improvement, he wrote these lines:

Little beds of flowers,
  Little coats of paint
Make a pleasant cottage
  Out of one that aint.

These words and the lilt of the lines create a mood at once. Quote them before any audience, and a unanimous smile appears. They recall a pleasant childhood rhyme; they suggest a happy couple working together to make an humble home more attractive; the use of *aint* helps to popularize the idea; the whole thing is so obviously true, so naive, that one has to accept the implied moral, "anybody can help and therefore everybody ought." The mood created is favorable to action. At its level the verse is a work of fine art.

How different the mood created by the first verse of Parson's *Paradisi Gloria:*

There is a city, builded by no hand,
  And unapproachable by sea or shore;
And unassailable by any band
  Of storming soldiery forevermore.

The words carry what Ruskin calls "a higher and darker meaning." Each succeeding line adds to our sense of the exalted inaccessible radiant peace of the eternal city of God.

Think of the mood created by the rollicking movement of the galloping horse in "How We Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix":

I sprang to the stirrup, and Joris, and he,
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three.
"Good speed!" cried the watch, as the gatebolts undrew;
"Speed!" echoed the wall to us galloping through.

Now compare that with what Kipling called "the terrible slow swing" of the Battle Hymn of the Republic:

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.
He is treading out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He has loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword,
  His truth is marching on.
    Glory, Glory, hallelujah!

In each case the rhythm, the words, and an indefinable something that arises perhaps from the sounds of the letters in sequence, all combine to create the mood appropriate to the embodied idea.

PLATE XCI. SUMMER MORNING. BY RUDOLPH EICKEMEYER.

"Form and content are perfectly adapted to one another," as Hegel has said. Each is "the free and adequate embodiment of the idea, in a form peculiarly appropriate to the idea itself."

So is it always in the best pictorial art. Look at Plate XCI. To one who has arisen early to be at a favorite pool in the swamp at sunrise this photograph by Rudolph Eickemeyer reflects perfectly a summer morning. The composition, at once formal and free—the sun and the bush in the center, and the diverse trees balanced on either side; the orderly sequences of the light with the fortuitous dapple of darks; the veils of mist, of ever-increasing luminosity, through which everything appears, as one penetrates the distance; all combine to re-create in the observer the very mood originally induced by nature herself,—fate and freewill reconciled momentarily in a world of wondrous beauty.

How different the mood created by Plate XCII—not a summer morning in the country, but a "Winter Night in the City." The conventional alley, the high dark walls, the cold snow, the poor

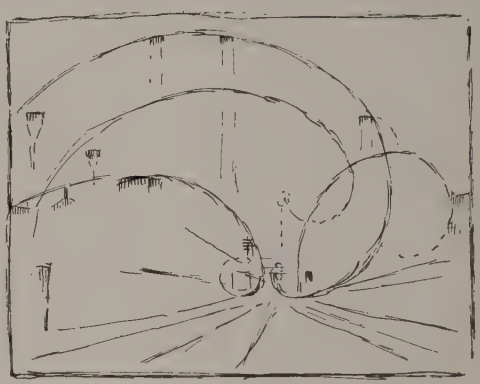
PLATE XCII. WINTER NIGHT. BY JESSIE TARBOX BEALS.

Christmas trees stuck not upright as they grew but carelessly into the snow bank, the artificial light, the gloom, the unfriendliness of it all, with the footprints of some wanderer who passed by unwelcomed anywhere,—all these elements combine to produce a perfect embodiment of the subject, in the picturing of which Jessie Tarbox Beals was, as Emerson might phrase it, bribed by Beauty herself, "to report her features only."

Carl Semon of Cleveland has caught the swart mills of his city at their supreme moment and forced them to yield him a perfectly harmonious picture, Plate XCIII. It is all movement and contrast,—black stacks and gray sky; gloomy walls and dark rails and light snow; with the swirling of the vapor and smoke over towards the right, repeating the line of sequence in the chimney tops and other

PLATE XCIII. SNOW, STEAM, AND SMOKE. BY CARL E. SEMON.

spots of contrast, and converging upon the fascinating central vista, with its precious little puff of steam. The main lines of this splendid composition are traced roughly in the diagram. Only such exciting lines could help to create the mood required. They are as essential here as are the rigid straight lines in Mrs. Beals' picture, converging upon an empty spot of gloom.



A similar consistency of character, and therefore the same harmony, appears in each of the plates from the figure.

Plate XCIV, a portrait by Jessie Tarbox Beals, is characterized by the languid line and air. The whole composition is not spirited but wilted. The head droops, the hair hanges low, the eyes look downward, the lower lip falls. Even the band about the head bends

downward at both ends. It is a charming presentation of pensive beauty, full of rhythmic measures and lines and admirably balanced attractions, all subordinated to the face.

PLATE XCIV. PORTRAIT.
BY JESSIE TARBOX BEALS.

Plate XCV, "The Readers," by Clarence H. White, is a brilliant masterpiece. From the shape of the picture to its last detail everything speaks of refinement. The sisters are of the intellectual type. Their faces testify that life for them is more than meat, and their clothes that it is something richer than raiment. The pose is grace itself; the two are one in their interest, and they are unconscious of the observer. They are reading. The more favored of the two, physically, has first place in the picture, but with sisterly devotion she is serving the less favored by holding the paper for her. The rhythms of measure, of dark-and-light, and of line, are all excellent, and the balance of the whole is exactly right. Such work, to quote the fine phrase of Dr. Ross, "is achieved instinctively and recognized intuitively." The whole is so satisfactory, that as the French say, "Nothing can be added and nothing removed to improve the effect."

"The Widow," Plate XCVI, is one of the many triumphs of Gertrude Kasebier. It is characterized by what may be called the interrupted line. The chief line in the mother's figure, that dividing the breadth of light and shade, has a kink in it, a sudden bend interrupting its flow. Notice how that line is echoed everywhere; in the normally vertical and continuous edge of the sideboard at the right; in its lower edge; in the leg of the table; in its brackets; in the end of the empty seat; in the contours of nearly all the objects upon the shelves. Even the window presents an unusual central interruption by showing both parts of the meeting rail. All these details reflect the interrupted life, of which the vacant

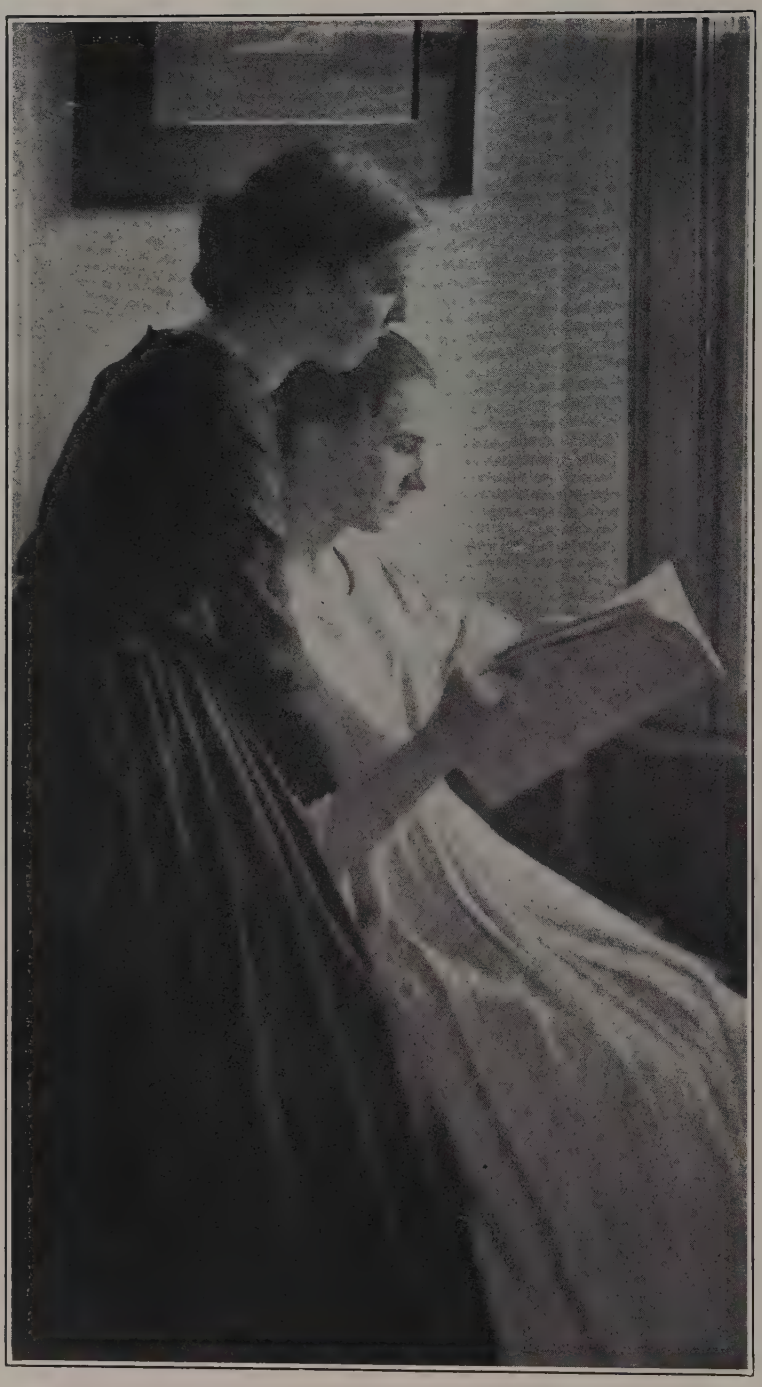


PLATE XCV. THE READERS. BY CLARENCE H. WHITE.

PLATE XCVI. THE WIDOW. A PHOTOGRAPH BY GERTRUDE KASEBIER, FIRST PUBLISHED IN THE "OUTLOOK."

chair is so forceful a reminder. The artist may not have thought out these relationships, she may not have been conscious of their presence; but that she felt them and saw here a perfect embodiment of the widowed life is proved by the fact of the picture itself. One secret of its beauty lies undoubtedly in this play upon the odd rhythm or line-motive.

In these six examples of fine art in photography, all the elements that I have tried to set forth in the previous chapters are exemplified. Each presents a single subject, with a supreme center of interest; each presents that subject at a supreme moment, enhanced by favoring conditions; each is well placed within its frame lines, rhythmic in its measures and accents, and well balanced; harmonious in every detail, and carrying the subtle power to recreate in the observer the mood of the artist at the moment of his delight in that particular subject. Art is nature intelligently composed with an esthetic purpose, and glorified by emotion.

WHILE WE ALL BEGAN TOGETHER TO SAY THAT HERE WE ALL END TOGETHER WITH COMPLETE HARMONY WOULD BE A RATHER RASH ASSUMPTION. AND YET THE AUTHOR VENTURES TO HOPE THAT HIS READERS WILL AGREE WITH HIM IN THIS:— PHOTOGRAPHY HAS GREAT POSSIBILITIES AS A NEW FINE ART, IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF WHICH EVEN THE HUMBLEST EFFORTS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED.